
CHAPTER 5

DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Defensive operations defeat an enemy attack, buy time, economize forces, or develop conditions favorable for offensive operations. Defensive actions alone are not decisive; they must be combined with or followed by offensive action. Even within the conduct of the SBCT defense, the battalion exploits opportunities to conduct offensive operations within its area of operations to deprive the enemy of the initiative and create the conditions to assume the offensive.

Section I. FUNDAMENTALS OF THE DEFENSE

The battalion defends temporarily to create the conditions necessary to resume offensive operations in order to defeat the enemy decisively. As part of the SBCT, the battalion may defend, delay, withdraw, counterattack, or perform security operations or economy of force tasks. A defensive engagement often requires the battalion to execute several of these tasks over its course. This section discusses the fundamentals of the defense.

5-1. PURPOSE OF THE DEFENSE

The main purpose of the defense is to force or deceive the enemy into attacking under unfavorable circumstances, defeat or destroy his attack, and regain the initiative for the offense. The defending commander seeks to dictate where the fight will occur, preparing the terrain and other conditions to his advantage while simultaneously denying the enemy adequate intelligence. Defense is a temporary measure used to identify or exploit enemy weaknesses. Use of the defense provides the opportunity to change to the offense. In general, the battalion defends to--

- Defeat or destroy an attacking enemy.
- Increase the enemy's vulnerability by forcing him to concentrate his forces.
- Gain time.
- Deny enemy entry into an area or retain terrain.
- Economize forces in one area to apply decisive force elsewhere.
- Increase the enemy's vulnerability by forcing him to concentrate forces.
- Prepare to resume the offensive.
- Develop favorable conditions for offensive actions.
- Reduce the enemy's capability for offensive operations.

5-2. ORGANIZATION OF DEFENSIVE ACTIONS

Defensive operations are organized around a framework of a security area, a main battle area, and a rear area.

a. **Security Area.** The SBCT normally establishes a security force to provide early warning, reaction time, and initial resistance to the enemy. Depending on the SBCT commander's guidance and plan, the battalion has several possible security force missions and options. The battalion may--

- Establish a security area layered behind the SBCT to add depth to the effort.
- Secure its own flanks and rear while SBCT assets conduct the primary security area effort forward of the forward edge of the battle area (FEBA).

- Conduct its own security effort in the absence of a higher echelon security force.
- Provide units for the SBCT security force. This could include the reconnaissance platoon, mortar platoon, or both; maneuver platoons or companies; or the entire battalion.

(1) ***Security Area Definition.*** The SBCT commander defines the SBCT's security area, the battle handover line from the SBCT to the battalion, the exact trace of the FEBA, and where he envisions the main battalion fight will occur. From this, the battalion commander can determine how to structure his security area and the array of forces to employ. If the battalion commander must organize his own security force, he chooses from three basic options:

- Use the reconnaissance platoon only as a screening force.
- Use the reconnaissance platoon in conjunction with maneuver elements, mortars, or both, in a screen mission. A combatant company commander can command this force, or it can operate directly under battalion control.
- Utilize a company with or without the reconnaissance platoon and mortars in a guard mission.

(2) ***Specific Guidance and Tasks.*** No matter what task organization he implements, the commander should provide the force with specific guidance and tasks. This may include--

- Duration of the mission.
- Results to be achieved against the enemy.
- Specific CCIR with associated NAIs and TAIs.
- Avenues of approach to be monitored with PIR and last time information is of value.
- CS and CSS.
- Disengagement and withdrawal criteria and rearward passage coordinating instructions.
- Follow-on tasks or missions.

(3) ***Simultaneous Missions.*** Using battalion resources to establish a security area while simultaneously requiring the battalion to defend the MBA is risky and divides the attention of the commander. Whenever possible, this should be avoided. Figure 5-1 illustrates a typical organization of a defensive battlefield.

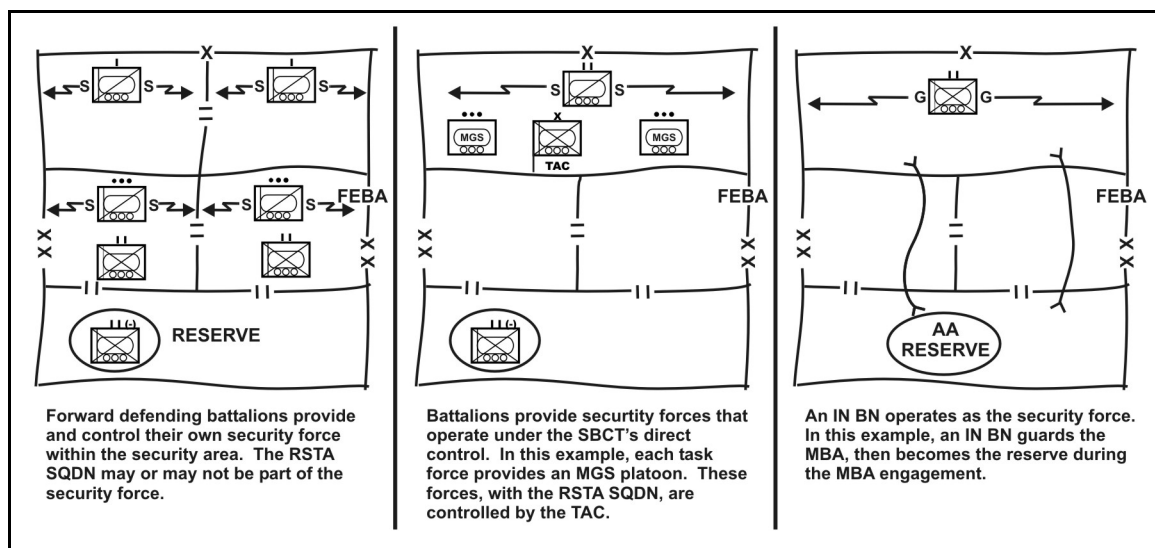


Figure 5-1. SBCT organization of security zone forces.

b. **Main Battle Area.** The SBCT and its battalions deploy the bulk of their combat power in the MBA. The SBCT's MBA extends from the FEBA to the forward battalions' rear boundaries. Battalion main battle areas are subdivisions of the SBCT's MBA. The FEBA marks the foremost limit of the areas in which the preponderance of ground combat units deploy, excluding the areas in which security forces are operating. The SBCT commander assigns the battalion MBAs by establishing unit boundaries. SBCT and battalion commanders establish areas of operation, battle positions, or strongpoints to implement their concepts of operations. As in all operations, commanders promote freedom of action by using the least restrictive control measures necessary to implement their tactical concepts (Figure 5-2).

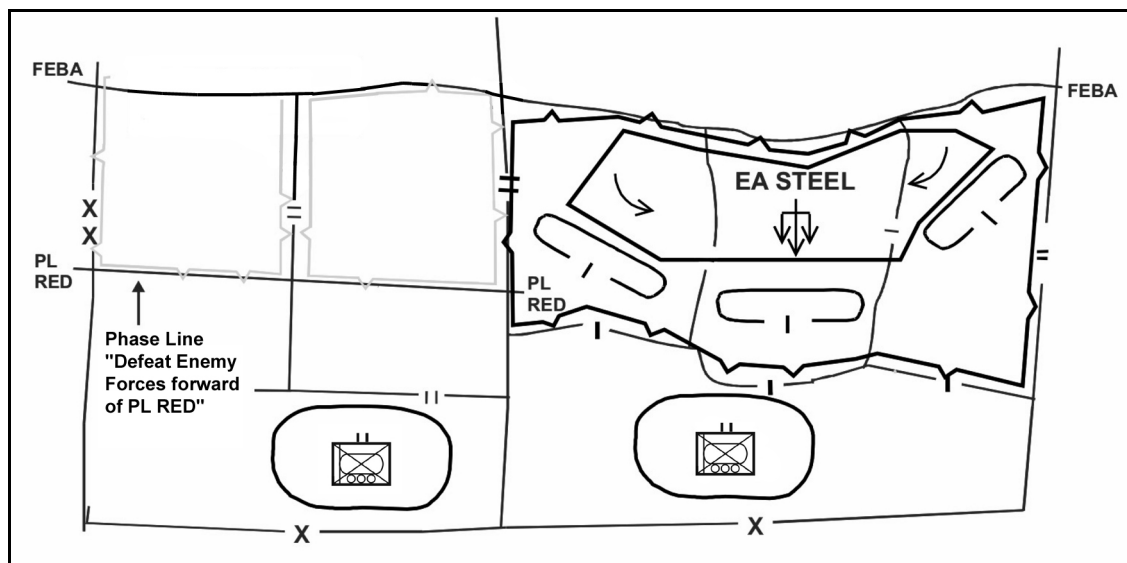


Figure 5-2. Sample area defense using static and dynamic elements.

5-3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEFENSE

Much like offensive operations, the SBCT infantry battalion differs from its more traditional counterparts only in its operational style. The characteristics of the defense remain largely unchanged. Due to its advantages in information, lethality, and mobility, the battalion can defend in linear as well as nonlinear frameworks. The ISR capabilities within the SBCT structure enable the battalion to locate and discern the enemy's main and supporting efforts and the means by which he will apply that effort. Preparation, security, disruption, massing effects, and flexibility continue to characterize the battalion's defensive operations.

a. **Preparation.** Against an opponent operating in a more conventional style, the battalion commander determines likely enemy avenues of approach, likely enemy schemes of maneuver, where to kill the enemy, integration of obstacles, unit positioning, and integration of indirect fires, and he assigns mission accordingly. Defensive preparations include the following:

(1) The S2, S3, and BOS representatives execute the MDMP under the XO's supervision for the commander's approval. The C2 INFOSYS architecture allows the commander to circulate on the battlefield while issuing guidance and approving products throughout the process. The staff is able to interface with the SBCT and higher elements for sophisticated computer analysis of enemy COAs and friendly plans.

(2) Enact force protection measures, which involve action against conventional threats (preparation of fighting positions, digging-in C2 nodes, and so forth) as well as asymmetric threats (terrorist attacks and WMD employment).

(3) Designate a reserve.

(4) Conduct rehearsals, to include employment of the reserve and counterattack forces.

(5) During all types defensive operations, position forces in depth.

(6) Reinforce terrain with obstacles to favor the defender.

b. **Security.** Since a force defends to conserve combat power for use elsewhere, or at a later time, commanders must secure the force. The battalion ensures security by

employing reconnaissance elements throughout the depth and breadth of its assigned AO. The cavalry squadron (RSTA), sensors, and the MICO's tactical (TAC) HUMINT assets in the SBCT conduct reconnaissance and surveillance to define and confirm the threat spatially (at extended ranges) and in terms of time and manner. Deception and information operations aid in securing the force and confuse the enemy as to the battalion's manner of defense. The battalion secures the force through integrated security operations tied with the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and other ISR assets.

c. **Disruption.** Defenders disrupt an attacker's tempo and synchronization by countering his initiative and preventing him from massing overwhelming combat power. Disruption attacks the enemy's will to fight. Deep precision fires, scatterable mines (SCATMINES), unexpected defensive positions, local counterattacks at all levels, and attacks delivered by a highly mobile reserve force combine to disrupt the enemy's attack and break his will to continue offensive operations. Repositioning forces, aggressive local force protection measures, random employment of roadblocks, ambushes, checkpoints, and information operations combine to disrupt the threat of asymmetrical attack. Attacks on these disrupt enemy efforts to fight as a combined arms team. Maneuver units deceive the enemy as to the nature of their defense and employ local combined arms counterattacks to break the tempo of the enemy's attack. The SBCT's integrated ISR capability produces dominant information superiority that allows the commander to "see" and prevent the enemy from fully preparing his attack.

d. **Massing Effects.** The battalion shapes and decides the battle by massing the effects of overwhelming combat power. Effects should be synchronized in time and space and should be rapid and unexpected so that they break the enemy's offensive tempo and disrupt his attack. The commander employs integrated ISR to shift the effects of fires and maneuver forces so that they are repeatedly focused and refocused to achieve decisive, destructive, and disruptive effects upon the enemy's attack. The commander must be audacious in achieving overwhelming combat effects at the decisive point by utilizing his information dominance to take acceptable risks in other areas.

e. **Flexibility.** The defender gains flexibility by sound preparation, disposition in depth, retention of reserves, repositioning, and effective command and control. The defense is characterized by rapid simultaneous and collaborative planning with flexible execution. Contingency planning permits flexibility. Flexibility also requires that the commander "see the battlefield" to detect the enemy's scheme of maneuver early. IPB determines likely enemy actions, and security elements confirm or deny those actions.

Section II. TYPES OF DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

There are three types of defensive actions: area defense, mobile defense, and retrograde operations. Each of these types of defensive actions contains elements of the others and usually contains both static and dynamic aspects. Battalions serve as the primary maneuver elements or terrain-controlling units for the SBCT in all types of defensive operations. They may defend AOs or positions or may serve as security forces or reserves as part of the SBCT coordinated defense.

5-4. AREA DEFENSE

The area defense concentrates on denying an enemy force access to designated terrain for a specific time. Outright destruction of the enemy may not be a criterion for success. The

focus is on retaining terrain where the bulk of the defending force positions itself in mutually supporting positions, controlling the terrain between positions. The defeat mechanism is massing effects into engagement areas, usually supplemented by intervention of a reserve. The commander uses his reserve force to reinforce fires, add depth, block penetrations, restore positions, or counterattack to destroy enemy forces and seize the initiative. Area defenses are conducted when--

- The mission requires holding certain terrain for a specific period of time.
- There is enough time to organize the position.
- The battalion or SBCT has less mobility than the enemy.
- The terrain limits counterattacks to a few probable employment options.
- The terrain affords natural lines of resistance and limits the enemy to a few well-defined avenues of approach, thereby restricting the enemy's maneuver.

The battalion commander normally selects one of two forms of defensive maneuver for an area defense--forward or defense in depth. However, the higher commander may define the general defensive scheme for the battalion. The specific mission may impose constraints such as time, security, and retention of certain areas that are significant factors in determining how the SBCT will defend.

a. **Forward Defense.** The intent of a forward defense is to limit the terrain over which the enemy can gain influence or control. The battalion deploys the majority of its combat forces near the FEBA with the reconnaissance platoon establishing a relatively narrow security area (Figure 5-3). The battalion fights to retain these forward positions and may conduct counterattacks against enemy penetrations or to destroy enemy penetrations in forward engagement areas. Due to its inherent lack of depth, the forward defense is the least preferred option. While the battalion may lack depth, companies and platoons are expected to build depth into the defense at their levels. The battalion can expect to conduct a forward defense for protection of critical assets or other forces, or for political purposes such as defending an ally's threatened border. A battalion may defend forward under the following conditions:

- Terrain forward in the AO favors the defense.
- Strong linear obstacles such as a river are located forward in the AO.
- The assigned AO lacks depth due to the location of the area or facility to be protected.
- Cover and concealment in the rear portion of the AO is limited.
- Higher headquarters directs the battalion to retain or initially control forward terrain.

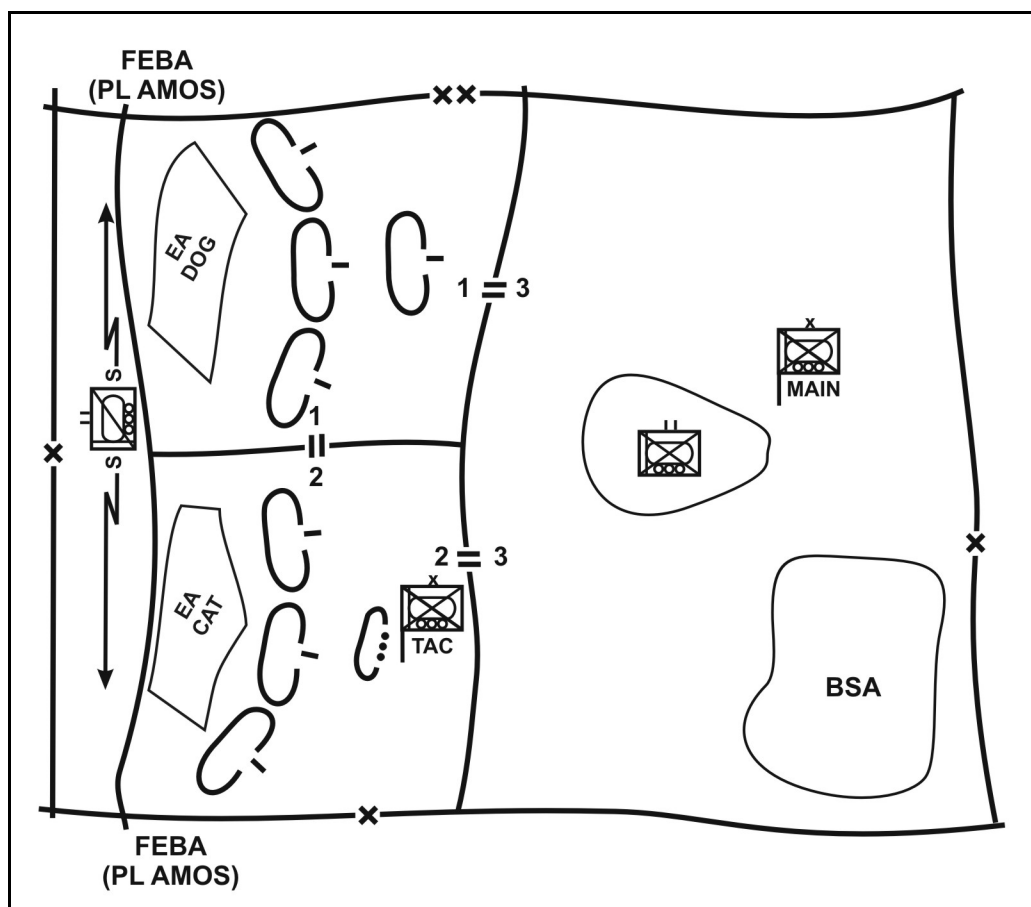


Figure 5-3. Example of a forward defense with battalions and companies defending forward.

b. **Defense in Depth.** A defense in depth is the preferred option when tactical conditions allow. It reduces the risk of the attacking enemy quickly penetrating the defense and affords some initial protection from enemy indirect fires. It also limits the enemy's ability to exploit a penetration through additional defensive positions employed in depth. The defense in depth provides more space and time to exploit ISR and fire support assets to reduce the enemy's options, weaken his forces, and set the conditions for destruction. It provides the commander more time to gain information about the enemy's intentions and likely future actions by taking full advantage of the C2 INFOSYS capabilities before decisively committing to a plan of his own. It also allows the battalion to execute decisive maneuver by effectively repositioning companies to conduct counterattacks or to prevent penetrations (Figure 5-4).

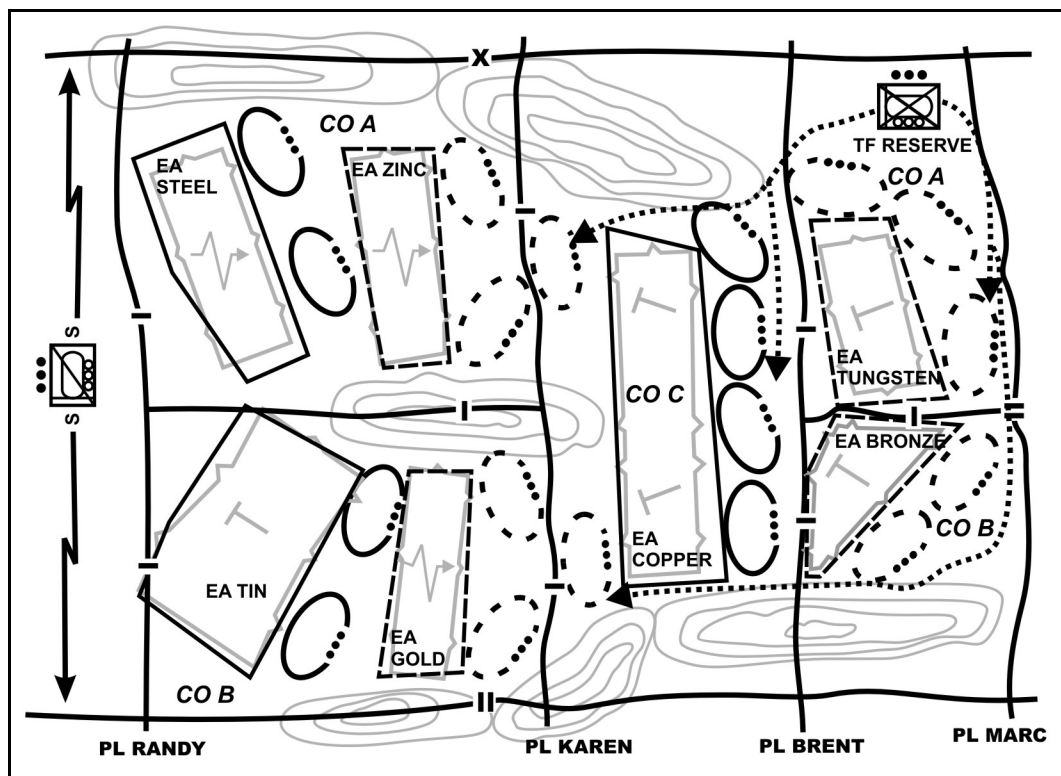


Figure 5-4. Defense in depth.

c. **Planning.** The commander must consider all the factors of METT-TC in order to determine how best to concentrate his efforts and economize forces. Detailed analysis of terrain may be the most important process that the commander and his staff complete. A successful defense relies on a complete understanding of terrain in order to determine likely enemy courses of action and the optimal positioning of the battalion assets to counter them. The commander's keys to a successful defense are--

- Capability to concentrate effects.
- Depth of the defensive area.
- Security.
- Ability to take full advantage of the terrain.
- Flexibility of defensive operations.
- Timely resumption of offensive action.

(1) **Security.** One of the first planning considerations for the battalion is security operations. The reconnaissance platoon, possibly with augmentation, will precede the maneuver battalion in order to clarify the tactical situation. The commander must give the reconnaissance platoon specific PIR to allow for an efficient occupation of the area of operations and to position itself for the preparation and execution of the area defense. On a noncontiguous battlefield, the security force must be positioned between the protected force and the known or suspected enemy locations.

(2) **Maneuver.** In noncontiguous operations, the battalion often must defend either on a broad front or in an AO large enough that employing units in mutually supporting positions is unrealistic. This requires a judicious effort by the commander and his staff in

determining the positioning of maneuver forces. The battalion has the unique ability to defend in restricted and severely restricted terrain with infantry while also being able to cover mounted avenues of approach or open areas effectively with MGS, ICVs, and Javelins. During the terrain analysis, the commander and staff must look closely for choke points, intervisibility lines, and reverse slope opportunities in order to take full advantage of the battalion's capabilities to mass fires and effects while providing protection for the units.

(a) Once the commander has assigned areas of responsibility to his companies, he must determine any potential gaps between higher headquarters, adjacent, and subordinate units. The battalion should plan to cover these gaps with reconnaissance assets, aggressive patrolling from the companies, and local observation posts. The battalion must plan local counterattacks to isolate and destroy any enemy that manages to penetrate through a gap in the AO. The commander should also plan to reposition units not in contact to mass the effects of combat power against an attacking enemy.

(b) The need for flexibility through the mobility of rifle companies requires graphic control measures to assist in command and control during local counterattacks and repositioning of forces. Specified routes, phase lines, attack by fire positions, engagement areas, target reference points, and other fire control measures are required for the effective synchronization of maneuver. The following are the steps for engagement area development (asterisks denote steps that may occur simultaneously).

- Identify enemy avenues of approach.
- Determine enemy scheme of maneuver.
- Determine where the battalion wants to kill the enemy
- Emplace and integrate weapons systems and or direct fire. *
- Plan and integrate obstacles.*
- Plan and integrate fires.*
- Rehearse the direct fire plan and engagement criteria actions in the EA.

(3) ***Positioning the Reserve.*** The commander must designate and position the reserve in a location where it can effectively react to several contingency plans. He must consider terrain, trafficability of roads, potential engagement areas, probable points of enemy penetrations, and commitment time. The commander may have a single reserve under battalion control or, if the terrain dictates, the companies may designate their own reserves. The reserve should be positioned outside the enemy's direct fire range in a covered and concealed position. Information concerning the reserve must be considered EEFI and protected from enemy reconnaissance. The commander may choose to position his reserve forward initially to deceive the enemy or to move the reserve occasionally in order to prevent it from being targeted by enemy indirect fires.

(a) The size of the reserve depends upon the size of the area covered in the defense and the clarity of expected enemy action. The battalion may need to defend an AO so large that only local reserves are feasible due to reaction time and the number of potential enemy COAs. The SBCT cavalry squadron (RSTA), in conjunction with the reconnaissance platoon, should be able to clarify enemy intentions by collecting information on the massing of forces, electronic signals, and troop movement. This information allows the commander to gain an understanding of the situation and to better focus his efforts toward the size and task organization of the reserve.

(b) The battalion must give specific planning guidance to the reserve to include priority for planning. The reserve commander should also expect to receive specific decision points and triggers for employment on each contingency. This guidance allows the reserve commander to conduct quality rehearsals and to anticipate his commitment as he monitors the fight. Finally, the commander must develop a plan to reconstitute the original reserve once it is committed. This is most often accomplished with a unit out of contact.

(4) **Fire Support.** The battalion may receive priority of fires for a specific mission or phase of the defense. The battalion and company mortars are its primary indirect fire assets, and the commander must not rely solely on the limited indirect fire assets available to the SBCT. The following are considerations for the fire support plan:

- Allocate initial priority of fires to the forward security force. Plan targets along enemy reconnaissance mounted and dismounted avenues of approach.
- Engage approaching enemy formations at vulnerable points along their route of march with indirect fires and CAS, if available.
- Plan the transition of fires to the MBA fight.
- Develop clear triggers to adjust fire support coordination measures and priority of fires.
- Ensure integration of fires in support of obstacle effects.
- Ensure integration of fires with the battalion counterattack plans and repositioning contingency plans.

(5) **Engineer Support.** Plan the transition to countermobility and survivability work in detail, ensuring adequate time for subordinate engineer troop-leading procedures.

(a) Site situational obstacles early. Plan multiple locations to support depth and flexibility in the defense. Ensure adequate security for obstacle emplacement systems. Integrate triggers for execution of situational and reserve obstacles in the decision support template.

(b) Focus the countermobility effort to shape the enemy's maneuver into positions of vulnerability.

(c) Ensure adequate mobility support for withdrawing security forces, the reserve, and repositioning of MBA forces.

(d) Ensure integration of survivability priorities for critical systems and units.

(6) **Air Defense Support.** Key factors the battalion must consider, when ADA assets are available, include the following:

- Position ADA assets and radars along air avenues of approach to provide early detection and engagement of enemy aircraft. Defeat enemy air before it enters the battalion's AO or AI.
- Provide all-round air defense protection to the battalion with mutual supporting and overlapping fires. Weight fires toward likely air avenues of approach.
- Plan primary, alternate, and supplementary firing positions to support defensive delays, positions in depth, and counterattacks.
- Reposition ADA assets to replace lost assets or to mass against significant air threats.
- Ensure adequate security, survivability support, and CSS (especially missile caches) for ADA assets.

- Establish priorities of air defense protection based on the criticality and vulnerability of units and the threat.
- Expect the enemy to employ heavy air attacks against critical friendly positions (battle positions [BPs] and start points [SPs]) to support a breakthrough of the battalion's defense.
- Protect the reserve, which has a critical role in the defense. The enemy will attempt to identify and target it to prevent its decisive employment.
- Protect C2 assets. They are normally stationary and produce a high electronic signature; thus, they are more susceptible to identification and targeting by enemy air attacks. ADA assets protecting forward maneuver forces normally provide C2 assets with incidental area coverage.
- Protect logistics units.

(7) **Aviation Support.** In defensive operations, the speed and mobility of aviation can help maximize concentration and flexibility. During preparation for defensive operations, aviation units may support the battalion commander with aerial reconnaissance and fires. (See Appendix G, Aviation Support of Ground Operations.)

(a) During the defense, aviation fires can attack deep against high-payoff targets, enemy concentrations, and moving columns and can disrupt enemy centers of gravity. Attack helicopter units can be employed in depth to attack follow-on echelons before they can move forward to the close battle. Aviation forces may also conduct screening operations and may conduct guard operations of an open flank in conjunction with ground forces.

(b) Attack helicopters routinely support security zone operations and mass fires during the MBA fight. Synchronization of aviation assets into the defensive plan is important to ensure aviation assets are capable of massing fires and to prevent fratricide. Detailed air-ground integration and coordination is necessary to ensure efficient use of aviation assets (see Appendix G, Aviation Support of Ground Operations.). If the battalion is assigned aviation assets, careful consideration must be given to EA development and direct fire planning and the supporting aviation unit, through its aviation LNO, must be involved with the planning process.

(8) **Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical Support.** Plan for NBC reconnaissance at likely locations for enemy employment of chemical agents. Use obscurants to support disengagement or movement of forces.

(9) **Combat Service Support.** Plan primary and alternate MSRs to support the full depth of the defense. Coordinate MSRs to avoid interfering with maneuver of obstacle plans. Specify routes for contaminated equipment movement. Also, consider the use of pre-stocked classes of supply (Classes IV and V) within the defense.

(10) **Civil Concerns.** Consideration of the higher headquarters ROE and limitations is necessary, particularly civilian effects and restrictions on fires and types of weapons. Civilians may be removed from the area or protected in their homes. Their movement and protection is a concern to the battalion in all cases. In some cases, the battalion may have to arrange for supply, transportation, and medical care for civilians.

(a) Restrictions may exist regarding use of cluster munitions, mines, nonlethal agents, obscurants, and even mortar fires. Firing into towns or in the vicinity of refugees may be prohibited. Historical and cultural features may be protected. All of this can influence the design of the defense.

(b) Consider availability of civilian assets and any limitations on use, including--

- Law enforcement support.
- Movement control.
- Transportation assets.
- Preclusion of area damage.
- Telecommunications security.
- Emergency supplies.
- Medical support.
- Decontamination support.

d. **Preparation.** During preparation, the commander and staff monitor preparatory actions and track the higher and adjacent unit situations and the enemy situation. They must update and refine plans based on additional reconnaissance and updated intelligence information. They conduct much of the preparation phase simultaneously with security operations, continuing even as forward-deployed forces gain contact with the enemy. Throughout the preparation phase, the battalion commander, company commanders, and key staff members should physically inspect preparatory activities. Weapons positioning, siting of obstacles, direct and indirect fire plans, CSS operations, and soldier knowledge of their missions are all critical checks.

(1) **Rehearsals.** The battalion and subordinate units should conduct rehearsals to practice their defense against multiple enemy COAs. The type of rehearsal executed must consider time, preparation activities, and OPSEC. Rarely will the battalion be able to conduct a full-force rehearsal given the tempo of operations and the potentially large size of the AO. It may be better for key leaders to conduct a digital or map and or terrain board rehearsal at night in order to focus their attention during periods of increased visibility on inspecting preparations and working with subordinate leaders. The rehearsal should cover--

- Reconnaissance and security operations.
- Battle handover and passage of lines.
- MBA engagement.
- Reserve employment options.
- Actions to deal with enemy penetrations, major enemy efforts along areas of risk or flank avenues of approach, and enemy actions in the rear area.
- CSS operations, particularly casualty evacuation, emergency resupply operations, and reorganization.
- Execution of follow-on missions to exploit defensive success.
- Integration of aviation assets, if available.

(2) **Monitoring Preparation.** As subordinate units position their elements and execute defensive preparations, the battalion staff monitors and coordinates their activities and the overall situation.

(a) The S2 closely monitors the enemy situation and focuses on indicators that reveal the enemy's likely time and direction of attack. The staff continually analyzes this assessment to determine the effects on preparation time available. The commander must update his PIR as the situation changes and be prepared to adjust the reconnaissance and surveillance effort to answer those questions. The S3 closely monitors the status of rehearsals and updates the plan as needed based on continuously updated intelligence and

the status of preparations. The S4 analyzes the status of logistics and maintenance of equipment within the battalion to determine any required adjustments to the plan or task organization. The engineer officer monitors the progress of all engineer efforts within the AO. He continually projects the end state of this effort based on the current and projected work rates. He must identify potential shortfalls early and determine how to shift assets to make up for the shortfalls or recommend where to accept risk.

(b) As the enemy closes on the battalion's AO, the battalion begins final preparations that typically include--

- Final coordination for battle handover and passage of lines.
- Positioning of situational obstacle employment systems.
- Verification of communications status.
- Evacuation of unused Class IV and V to prevent capture or loss to enemy action.
- Withdrawal of engineer forces from forward areas.
- Linkup of CS and CSS assets with reserve or other supported combat forces (if not previously accomplished).
- Review of reconnaissance and surveillance plan to ensure it still meets the commander's PIR.
- Final positioning or repositioning of reconnaissance and surveillance assets, security forces, and observers.
- Positioning of teams to close lanes in obstacles or execute reserve obstacles.
- Execution of directed, reserve, or situational obstacles.
- Periodic situation updates and issuing of final guidance to subordinates.

This time may also be used to register indirect fire targets with mortars, if not already done. The commander may also conduct a final radio, digital, or even map rehearsal with key leaders.

(3) ***Security Area Actions.*** Once security area forces have moved into the security area, actions in the security area predominantly focus on reconnaissance, counterreconnaissance, target acquisition, reporting, delay of the enemy main body, and battle handover. The battalion's security zone forces must integrate their actions with friendly forces forward of them, maintaining information flow and security. The battalion's elements may have to execute battle handover with those forward elements and assist them in executing a rearward passage. The security zone forces must coordinate and cross-talk with the companies to their rear. Eventually, they must execute a rearward passage or move to the flanks of the main battle area. On approaches that the enemy does not use, it is usually advantageous to leave elements of the security force forward to preserve observation and access to enemy flanks.

(4) ***Reconnaissance and Surveillance.*** The purposes of the reconnaissance and surveillance effort in the security zone are to provide the commander with information to support his decision-making, to provide early warning and reaction time, and to support target acquisition. Guided by the commander's CCIR, the reconnaissance and surveillance plan, and the fire support plan, reconnaissance and surveillance assets provide information that includes--

- Location, movement, and destruction of enemy reconnaissance assets.
- Speed, direction, composition, and strength of enemy formations.

- Locations of high-payoff targets such as artillery and rocket units, bridging assets, and C2 nodes.
- Enemy actions at decision points.
- Enemy flanking actions, breaching operations, force concentrations, and employment of combat multipliers.
- Battle damage assessment.
- Movement of follow-on forces.

(a) The staff must integrate the information provided by the security forces with information received from higher and adjacent units, other subordinates, and sources such as JSTARS and UAVs.

(b) The total reconnaissance and surveillance effort must support the commander's decision-making. In an area defense, the commander's critical decisions normally include--

- Initiation and employment of fires against enemy formations.
- Modifications or adjustments to the defensive plan.
- Execution of situational obstacles.
- Withdrawal of forward security forces.
- Commitment of the reserve, counterattack, or both.

(5) **Battle Handover.** The battle handover is the transfer of responsibility for the battle from the SBCT's security zone elements to the battalions. The higher commander who established the security force prescribes criteria for the handover and designates the location where the security forces will pass through, routes, contact points, and the battle handover line. The battle handover line is normally forward of the FEBA where the direct fires of the forward combat elements of the battalions can effectively overwatch the elements of the passing unit. The SBCT commander coordinates the battle handover with the battalion commanders. This coordination overlaps with the coordination for the passage of lines, and the two should be conducted simultaneously. Coordination normally includes--

- Establishing communications. This includes ensuring linkage on the tactical internet and effective information overlap (ensuring elements in different units can see each other in the COP).
- Providing updates on both friendly and enemy situations, facilitated through the COP, and the addition of appropriate command posts and leaders to the message groups on situation reports and updates.
- Coordinating passage, which includes identifying passage points and lanes and exchanging or disseminating digital graphics of these and obstacle overlays. If either unit is not equipped with FBCB2, the coordination requires traditional passage of lines procedure.
- Collocating C2. If both units are digital, this is not required, but it is desirable.
- Dispatching representatives to contact points and establishing liaison. If the passing unit is not digitally equipped, the stationary unit should provide escorts to relay information about the passing unit.
- Coordinating recognition signals.
- Reporting status of obstacles and routes, including digital overlays.

- Coordinating fire support, air defense, and CSS requirements, with particular attention given to casualty and equipment evacuation requirements.
- Coordinating actions to assist the security force with breaking enemy contact.
- Coordinating and exchanging maneuver, obstacle, and fire plans.
- Coordinating location of and communications to any stay-behind elements. These must be integrated into fire support coordination measures to establish NFAs.

(a) Within the battalion, the battle handover between the battalion security elements and the companies is less formal or complicated. Elements must identify rearward passage points and lanes, and the passing elements need to coordinate their movement with the element(s) covering them and through which they are moving. Frequently, the first elements to displace are the maneuver forces that were executing counterreconnaissance, moving to initial defensive positions in the MBA, or acting as the battalion or SBCT reserve. The reconnaissance platoon normally displaces to vantage points on the flanks, moves to establish surveillance on other avenues of approach, or infiltrates back to the battalion rear area.

(b) When battle handover occurs within the battalion, the MBA companies--

- Assist passage of lines and disengagement.
- Gain and maintain contact with enemy forces as battle handover occurs.
- Maintain security.
- “On order” execute reserve obstacles (battalion commander restricts authority) and “be prepared” to emplace situational obstacles (situational obstacles may or may not be executed) in the security area as the passing force withdraws. (See FM 90-7, pages 2-2 to 2-3 [FM 3-34.1 Draft].)

(6) **Security Area Engagement.** Engagements in the battalion security area are normally limited. Counterreconnaissance forces focus on locating and destroying enemy reconnaissance elements. As the enemy closes into the area, observers initiate indirect fires and execution of reserve obstacles. The focal points are normally early warning and identification of the enemy main and supporting efforts in order for the commander to make decisions and position forces.

(7) **Main Battle Area Engagement.** The defensive battle is decided in the MBA by the actions of the battalions and companies and their supporting CS and CSS units.

(8) **Maneuver.** During the MBA engagement, the SBCT and battalions shift combat power and priority of fires to defeat the enemy’s attack. This may require--

- Adjustment of subordinates’ AOs and missions.
- Repositioning of forces.
- Shifting of the main effort.
- Commitment of the reserve.
- Modification of the original plan.

(a) Forward forces, obstacles, and fires within the MBA normally break the enemy’s momentum, reduce his numerical advantage, and force his troops into positions of vulnerability. The battalion masses fires (direct and indirect) and obstacles to disrupt, fix, and then destroy attacking enemy forces as they enter the engagement areas.

(b) Depending on the defensive scheme, the battalion may conduct delay operations capitalizing on movement and repeated attacks to defeat the enemy, or it may fight primarily from a single series of positions.

(9) **Cohesion.** The battalion must maintain a cohesive defense if it is to remain viable. This does not mean, however, that the forces must be massed close together. Companies can maintain cohesion with forces dispersed by maintaining a current COP, cross-talk among subordinates, and continual tracking and digital reporting of the enemy. The staff and commanders must continually assess the enemy's options and movement while identifying means to defeat them. With forces widely dispersed, continual assessment of time, distance, and trafficability factors is essential. To maintain defensive cohesion, company commanders must keep their movement, positioning, and fires consistent with the commander's defensive scheme.

(10) **Rear Area Threats.** During the MBA fight, protection of rear areas is necessary to ensure freedom of maneuver and continuity of operations. Because fighting in the rear area diverts combat power from the MBA, the commander carefully weighs the need for such diversions against the possible consequences to the overall operation. To make such decisions wisely, the commander requires accurate information to avoid late or inadequate responses and to guard against overreacting to exaggerated reports.

(a) Generally, CSS nodes in the battalion or SBCT rear area rely on positioning, movement, and self-protection for survival. They--

- Establish CSS operations in covered and concealed areas away from likely enemy avenues of approach.
- Establish and maintain perimeter security and early warning OPs, integrating weapons and crews that are in the rear for repair operations.
- Keep CSS nodes postured to move on very short notice as the security battle begins.

(b) Early warning to CSS units in the rear is critical to their survival in the event of a penetration of the MBA or an enemy attack from an unexpected area. CSS plans and rehearsals must address actions to be taken in the event of a rear area attack, including defensive measures, displacement criteria, routes, rally points, and subsequent positions to which to move.

(11) **Penetrations.** Unless the SBCT plan makes other provisions, each battalion commander is responsible for controlling enemy advances within his AO. If the enemy penetrates the defense or a penetration appears likely, the battalion commander repositions forces or commits his reserve to block the penetration or to reinforce the area where a penetration appears imminent. Simultaneously, the battalion commander allocates all indirect fires to support the threatened area. Additionally, he must alert the SBCT commander to the threat and that he has committed his reserve force (if applicable). The battalion commander may have to commit attached engineers to assist in containing the penetration or constitute a new reserve from the engineers.

(a) If a penetration threatens the battalion, the commander may take several actions to counter the situation. In order of priority, he may do any or all of the following:

- Allocate priority of all available indirect fires, to include CAS, to the threatened unit. This is the most rapid and responsive means of increasing the combat power of the threatened unit.
- Direct or reposition adjacent units to engage enemy forces that are attacking the threatened unit. This may not be possible if adjacent units are already decisively engaged.
- Commit the reserve to reinforce the threatened unit.

- Commit the reserve to block, contain, or destroy the penetrating enemy force.
- Accept penetration of insignificant enemy forces and maintain contact with them as they move deeper into the MBA.

(b) When a penetration occurs, units within the MBA continue to fight, refusing their flanks and engaging the enemy's flanks and rear. The penetrated force must attempt to hold the shoulders of the penetration to prevent the area of penetration from widening and to protect adjacent unit flanks. Adjacent units must take immediate action to secure their exposed flanks, which may include security missions or the establishment of blocking positions. Adjacent units may also need to reposition forces, readjust subordinate AOs and tasks, or commit their reserve. MBA forces attempt to reestablish contact across the area of penetration when possible.

(12) **Counterattack.** The battalion may conduct local counterattacks to restore or preserve defensive integrity. Unless defensive operations have left the battalion largely unscathed, the battalion usually lacks the ability to conduct a significant counterattack by itself. Within the context of the SBCT's operations, a defending battalion may execute a counterattack in support of the SBCT's defensive posture, as part of a larger force seeking to complete the destruction of the enemy's attack, or as part of a transition to offensive operations.

(13) **Defense of an Extended Area of Operation.** With information dominance, air superiority, and access to dynamic obstacles and extensive long-range fire support, the SBCT can defend in a greatly enlarged AO. When it does so, the battalions defend as semi-independent entities, aware of their surroundings in great detail and supported with responsive fires and MI assets but without direct contact with one another and beyond the immediate support of reserve forces. Essentially, these operations are area defenses with exceptionally low force-to-space ratios.

(a) Battalions defending in extended AOs base their operations on information dominance, superior intelligence, tactical agility, long-range fires, and continuous freedom of action. Based on a defensive concept that clearly divides responsibilities between SBCT headquarters and the battalions, they employ massed long-range fires and other combat effects to immobilize, disorganize, and destroy enemy forces across a broad area. Close combat in these operations is limited to short, violent counterattacks or direct fire ambushes against damaged, vulnerable fragments of the enemy's force.

(b) Battalion maneuver plans for defense in an extended AO resemble delays; their commanders position companies to deny key terrain, to observe the enemy at long range, and to move as necessary to attack the enemy with long-range fires while preserving their freedom of action. Rather than consistently withdrawing under pressure, however, the battalion advances, displaces laterally, and withdraws as the enemy loses forces or gains ground. The battalion may use routes, phase lines, areas of operation, and directions of attack to control the movement of companies and platoons.

(c) The SBCT and division staffs must assure that battalions defending in this manner maintain a highly accurate view of the enemy, the environment, and significant civilian factors. Some sensors and their downlinks may be directly assigned to the battalions for these operations. Elements of the cavalry squadron (RSTA) and divisional aviation elements assist the battalions in defending these large areas, assuming responsibility for specified enemy forces as the situation develops. Maintaining contact with the enemy and sustaining observation of every part of the AO is of special importance in a defense of

this type. Losses of reconnaissance and surveillance coverage demand immediate attention.

(d) A defense in an extended AO heavily tasks the battalion fire support officer. The company FISTs are widely separated and may require simultaneous high-priority support. Additionally, they commonly must coordinate CAS and attack helicopter support. The FSO's workload can be reduced by a concept of fire support that assigns a large part of the coordination responsibility to the SBCT FSO, but he is also heavily tasked because of the SBCT's expanded area of operations.

(e) The battalion's understanding of the terrain, weather, and radio-electronic environment is crucial to its success. To exploit information dominance, the battalion must understand the mobility potential of the area and maintain current intelligence that confirms the status of obstacles and routes. The battalion must anticipate changing weather and visibility conditions accurately in time to adjust its dispositions without losing control of the defended area. It must foresee enemy air assaults or strikes against choke points in the depth of the defended area and account for them either by tactical counteraction or by strong air defense of vital points.

(f) Threats to communication also pose special problems for the battalion when it defends in an extended AO. Digitized C2 assets are key to defending effectively in a large AO. The SBCT and division signal officers must provide redundant networks to ensure current information and orders reach the battalion, which then distributes them to companies. The battalion must establish priorities for information transfer and command and control to allow it to continue operating if the digital system is impaired. Special means of ensuring contact with all friendly forces--retransmission stations, relays, and additional radios--also merit attention in planning for operations in an extremely large AO.

(g) When defending in extended areas, the battalion performs land management tasks in many cases that are more typical of SBCT operations. Getting sensors, forward arming and refueling points (FARPs), field artillery (FA) systems, aid stations, CSS collection and supply points, and command posts far enough forward to function may necessitate positioning them in the battalion AO. While the battalion should not be required to defend such sites, it must follow their movements and clear their occupation of positions.

(h) The CSS effort also demands special planning and nearly flawless execution. The distances between companies, mortar positions, command posts, and other battalion elements adds considerably to the time necessary to move supply, maintenance, and medical support teams. Moving logistical elements over such distances calls for CSS leaders who can move quickly and adapt to friendly maneuver while en route across open spaces between units. Planners must provide for emergency resupply of fuel and ammunition, and battalion elements must be trained to receive it.

(i) Casualty evacuation assumes special importance because of the moral imperative of caring for wounded soldiers and the difficulty inherent in widely dispersed operations. In some cases, defending over extended frontages and depths requires the battalion to be augmented with supporting air ambulance units and positioning of those units inside the battalion AO.

(j) Transitioning to the offense depends on defeating the enemy decisively and on promptly recognizing that defeat. The SBCT commander must provide the planning and warning that precedes these transitions. Battalion and company commanders must be

ready to confirm sensor indications of enemy condition and to recommend transition to the offense as they sense the enemy's defeat.

5-5. MOBILE DEFENSE

The mobile defense concentrates on the destruction or defeat of the enemy through a decisive counterattack. A mobile defense requires considerable depth in the area of operations in order for the commander to shape the battlefield, causing the enemy to extend his lines of communication and support, expose his flanks, and dissipate his combat power. The focus is on defeating or destroying the enemy by allowing him to advance to a point where he is exposed to a decisive counterattack by the striking force. The striking force is a dedicated force composed of the bulk of the combat power and weighted with the majority of the available combat multipliers. A fixing force shapes the battlefield and the enemy, setting the conditions for the striking force. Battalions may participate in the mobile defense as an element in the fixing force conducting a delay or area defense. Battalions may also constitute an element of the striking force conducting offensive operations. (See Chapter 4 for discussion of offensive operations.)

5-6. RETROGRADE OPERATIONS

The retrograde is a type of defensive operation that involves organized movement away from the enemy (FM 3-0). The enemy may force these operations or a commander may execute them voluntarily. In either case, the higher commander of the force executing the operation must approve the retrograde. Retrograde operations are conducted to improve a tactical situation or to prevent a worse situation from developing. Battalions normally conduct retrogrades as part of a larger force but may conduct independent retrogrades as required, such as when conducting an area or point raid. In either case, the battalion's higher headquarters must approve the operation. Retrograde operations accomplish the following:

- Resist, exhaust, and defeat enemy forces.
- Draw the enemy into an unfavorable situation.
- Avoid contact in undesirable conditions.
- Gain time.
- Disengage from battle for use elsewhere in other missions.
- Reposition forces, shorten lines of communication, or conform to movements of other friendly units.

The three forms of retrograde operations are--

- Delay. This operation trades space for time and preserves friendly combat power while inflicting maximum damage on the enemy.
- Withdrawal. A withdrawal is a planned, voluntary disengagement from the enemy, which may be conducted with or without enemy pressure.
- Retirement. A retirement is an operation in which a force that is not in contact with the enemy moves to the rear in an organized manner.

NOTE: Maintenance of morale is essential among subordinate leaders and troops in a retrograde operation. Movement to the rear may seem like a defeat or a threat of isolation unless soldiers have confidence in their leaders and know the purpose of the operation and their roles in it.

5-7. DELAY

In a delay, the battalion trades space for time and inflicts maximum damage on the enemy while avoiding decisive engagement at the battalion level. It is critical that the commander's intent defines what is more important in the mission--time, damage to the enemy, or force protection. Inflicting damage is normally more important than gaining time. The commander establishes risk levels for each delay but ordinarily maintaining freedom of action and avoiding decisive engagement is of ultimate importance. The battalion may execute a delay when it has insufficient combat power to attack or defend or when the higher unit's plan calls for drawing the enemy into an area for a counterattack, as in a mobile defense. Delays gain time to--

- Allow other friendly forces to establish a defense.
- Cover a withdrawing force.
- Protect a friendly force's flank.
- Allow other forces to counterattack.

a. **Two Forms of Delay.** Based upon the commander's intent and METT-TC, a delay mission can have essentially two forms: delay within an area of operations or delay forward of a specific control measure.

(1) ***Delay within an Area of Operations.*** The battalion may be assigned a mission to delay within an area of operations. The higher commander normally provides guidance regarding intent and desired effect on the enemy, but he minimizes restrictions regarding terrain, time, and coordination with adjacent forces. This form of a delay is normally assigned when force preservation is the highest priority and there is considerable depth to the SBCT or division's area of operations.

(2) ***Delay Forward of a Specified Line for a Specified Time.*** The battalion may be assigned a mission to delay forward of a specific control measure for a specific period of time. This mission would be assigned when the SBCT or battalion must control the enemy's attack and retain specified terrain to achieve some purpose relative to another element, such as setting the conditions for a counterattack, for completion of defensive preparations, or for the movement of other forces or civilians. The focus of this delay mission is clearly on time, terrain, and enemy destruction. It carries a much higher risk for the battalion, with the likelihood of part of or the entire unit becoming decisively engaged. The timing of the operation is controlled graphically by a series of phase lines with associated dates and times to define the desired delay-until period.

b. **Culmination of the Delay.** Delay missions usually conclude in one of three ways--a defense, a withdrawal, or a counterattack. Planning options should address all three possibilities.

5-8. DELAY ORGANIZATION

The battalion's organization of its forces depends on how the SBCT has structured its forces unless the battalion operates independently. The SBCT normally organizes into a security force, main body, and reserve, but an extended AO may preclude the use of SBCT-controlled security forces and reserves. In this case, the SBCT may direct the battalion to organize its own security, main body, and reserve forces--the same as if the battalion were operating independently. The SBCT commander can designate a battalion as the security or reserve force for the SBCT. If the battalion has to establish a security

force, it normally uses the reconnaissance platoon as a screen force positioned to observe the most likely enemy avenues of approach and to initiate indirect fires to slow and weaken the enemy. Initially, the battalion main body usually locates well forward in the AO, then fights from a series of subsequent positions. The reserve force, normally one or two platoons, is used to defeat enemy penetrations or to assist units with breaking contact.

5-9. DELAY PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The delay requires close coordination of forces and a clear understanding by subordinates of the scheme of maneuver and commander's intent. The potential for loss of control is very high in delay operations, making cross-talk and coordination between subordinate leaders extremely important. Subordinate initiative is critical, but it must be in the context of close coordination with others. Plans must be flexible, with control measures throughout the AO allowing forces to be maneuvered to address all possible enemy options.

a. **General Considerations.** The commander determines the end state of the delay based on the higher commander's intent and specific parameters of the higher headquarters' delay order. The commander considers the factors of METT-TC, especially the effects of the terrain, to identify advantageous locations from which to engage the enemy throughout the depth of the AO. Specific delay planning considerations the commander and staff must determine include--

- Force array and allocation of combat multipliers, particularly fires and obstacles.
- Where and when to accept decisive engagement.
- Acceptable level of risk for each subordinate force.
- Form of delay and control measures (companies delay in sector, control by battle positions, or some other method).
- Integration of obstacle intent and essential fire support tasks (EFSTs).
- Likely subsequent mission, transition point(s), and conditions.

b. **Battalion Order.** The battalion order must clearly articulate the parameters of the delay mission. It specifically addresses subordinate missions in terms of space, time, and friendly strength. It also provides directions for actions if the subordinate commander is unable to meet the terms of his delay mission. The following is an example of the parameters of a delay mission issued to a subordinate battalion.

EXAMPLE

Mission: Battalion 3-6 IN delays to disrupt enemy forces forward of PL Blue (*space*) until 010400 Sep XX (*time*) to allow the remainder of the SBCT to complete defensive preparations (*why*).

Tasks to maneuver unit (3-6 IN): Retain at least 70% combat power (*friendly strength*). Force preservation is more important than time (*priority*). If unable to meet mission parameters, provide at least 30 minutes' warning before initiating rearward passage. Upon completion of rearward passage, assume SBCT reserve mission positioned vicinity BP 17.

c. **Effects of Terrain.** The staff analyzes the effects of terrain and the anticipated enemy situation to identify positions that offer the best opportunity to engage, delay, and inflict damage on the enemy force. As the staff develops delay positions and control measures, it calculates enemy closure rates and compares them to friendly displacement rates between positions. Time and space factors dictate the amount of time subordinate units have to engage the enemy and move before becoming decisively engaged; these factors are calculated for each avenue of approach. The staff develops triggers for displacement to positions in depth.

d. **Enemy Vulnerabilities.** The staff analyzes the terrain and expected enemy situation to identify advantageous locations from which to engage the enemy at existing obstacles such as chokepoints or urban or complex terrain. The staff also considers possible locations to plan counterattacks. Situational and event templates must tell the commander and staff where the enemy is likely to be at certain times. This helps them decide where to emplace obstacles, where to mass fires, and if or where decisive engagement is likely or required.

e. **Maneuver Considerations.** The staff considers maneuver actions, fires, obstacles, and the employment of other supporting assets necessary to degrade the enemy's mobility and support friendly forces' disengagement to subsequent positions. This is especially critical at locations and times when companies or the entire battalion may become decisively engaged with the enemy. As the staff develops and refines the plan, it develops decision points for key actions. This includes triggers for the employment of fires and situational or reserve obstacles; displacement of subordinate units to subsequent positions; and movement of indirect fire assets, C2 facilities, and CSS units. The staff also selects routes for reinforcements, artillery, CPs, and CSS elements to use and synchronizes their movements with the delaying actions of forward units.

5-10. DELAY SCHEME OF MANEUVER

The scheme of maneuver must allow the battalion to dictate the pace of the delay and maintain the initiative. The commander selects positions that allow his forces to inflict maximum damage on the enemy, support their disengagement, and enable their withdrawal. He may choose to delay from successive or alternating delay positions, depending on the strength of the companies and the size of the AO.

a. **Areas of Operations.** At the SBCT level, areas of responsibility are defined by establishing AOs for each battalion and developing control measures to ensure adequate controls while supporting decentralized freedom of action. The SBCT normally assigns deep, parallel AOs to delaying battalions. Each enemy avenue of approach is assigned to only one subordinate unit. Boundaries are used to define battalion AOs. When boundaries are drawn, terrain that provides fields of fire and observation into an area is assigned to the unit responsible for that AO or BP. The SBCT commander may also use phase lines to control the timing and movement of delaying units. Assigning time minimums to delay by phase lines constrains battalion commanders to delaying on or forward of those lines at least until the specified time. Contact points and other control measures are established to support flank unit coordination. The commander and his staff make provisions for

coordinated action along avenues of approach that diverge and pass from one subordinate AO to another.

b. **Control Measures.** The battalion commander may decide to add additional control measures, to include phase lines, battle positions, engagement areas, or attack-by-fire positions, that allow the battalion commander to direct the fight more closely and give subordinates a clearer picture of how he envisions fighting the delay.

c. **Delay Positions.** When determining the scheme of maneuver, positions should incorporate as many of the following characteristics as possible:

- Good observation and long-range fields of fire.
- Covered or concealed routes of movement to the rear.
- A road network or areas providing good cross-country trafficability.
- Existing or reinforcing obstacles to the front and flanks.
- Maximize use of highly defensible terrain.

5-11. MAXIMIZING THE USE OF TERRAIN IN A DELAY

Delay positions should be on terrain that controls likely enemy avenues of approach and allows engagements against the enemy where his movement is most canalized and facilitates maximum delay with minimum forces. Long-range direct fires are highly desirable because they force the enemy to deploy and move carefully and because they reduce the likelihood of unintended decisive engagement of companies and platoons. Integrating force positioning and movement with terrain, fires, and situational obstacles helps inflict maximum damage on the enemy while allowing friendly freedom of maneuver and disengagement. If not constrained by commander's guidance and rules of engagement, the cover and movement restrictions of urban areas should be extensively exploited if they cannot be readily bypassed.

5-12. FORCING THE ENEMY TO DEPLOY AND MANEUVER IN A DELAY

Engagement at maximum ranges of all weapons systems causes the enemy to take time-consuming measures to deploy, develop the situation, and maneuver to drive the delaying force from its position. An aggressive enemy commander will not deploy if he correctly determines that friendly forces are delaying; he will use his mass and momentum to develop sufficient pressure to cause friendly forces to fall back or become decisively engaged. Therefore, the delay must include the deadly integration of direct and indirect fires and situational obstacles to make the enemy doubt the nature of the friendly mission and leave him no choice but to deploy and maneuver.

5-13. AVOIDING DECISIVE ENGAGEMENT IN A DELAY

A key to a successful delay is to maintain a mobility advantage over the attacking enemy and avoid decisive engagement. The battalion seeks to increase its mobility while degrading the enemy's ability to move. The battalion improves its mobility by--

- Maintaining contact with the enemy, maintaining reconnaissance and security on flanks, and coordinating with adjacent units to prevent forces from being isolated.
- Reconnoitering routes and BPs.
- Improving routes, bridges, and fording sites between delay positions, as time and resources permit.

- Using indirect fires and obstacles to support disengagement and to cover movement between positions.
- Task-organizing and positioning breaching assets within subordinate formations to breach enemy scatterable mines rapidly.
- Using multiple routes.
- Controlling traffic flow and restricting refugee movements to unused routes.
- Keeping logistical assets uploaded and mobile.
- Caching ammunition on rearward routes. Ensure that units know the locations of these supply points (create a supply point icon in FBCB2). If possible, the supply point should be guarded and prepared for destruction if not used by delaying forces.
- Task-organizing additional medical and equipment evacuation assets to the battalions to increase their ability to disengage and displace rapidly.
- Positioning air defense assets to protect bridges and choke points on rearward routes.

The battalion degrades the mobility of the enemy by--

- Maintaining continuous pressure on the enemy throughout the area of operation.
- Attacking logistics as well as maneuver and fire support assets.
- Occupying and controlling chokepoints and key terrain that dominates high-speed avenues of approach.
- Destroying enemy reconnaissance and security forces, which blinds the enemy and causes him to move more cautiously.
- Engaging at maximum ranges.
- Employing a combination of directed, situational, and reserve obstacles.
- Employing indirect fires, smoke, and CAS, if available.
- Using deception techniques such as dummy positions.

5-14. PARAMETERS OF THE DELAY ORDER

As previously noted in paragraph 5-9, an order for a delay order must specify certain parameters. The parameters are normally expressed in an OPORD in Paragraph 3, Tasks to Maneuver Units.

a. First, it must direct one of two alternatives--delay throughout the depth of the AO or delay forward of a specific line or area for a specific period of time. A mission of delay within an AO implies that force integrity is a prime consideration. In this case, the battalion delays the enemy as long as possible while avoiding decisive engagement. If the delaying force is ordered to hold the enemy forward of a given phase line (PL) for a specified time, mission accomplishment outweighs preservation of the force's integrity. Such a mission may require the force to defend a given position until ordered to displace.

b. The second parameter the order must specify is what is acceptable risk. Acceptable risk ranges from accepting decisive engagement in an attempt to hold terrain for a given period of time to avoiding decisive engagement in order to maintain the delaying force's integrity. The depth available for the delay, the time needed by the higher headquarters, and subsequent missions for the delaying force determine the amount of acceptable risk.

c. Third, the order must specify whether the delaying force may use the entire AO or whether it must delay from specific BPs. A delay using the entire AO is preferable, but a delay from specific positions may be required to coordinate two or more units in the delay.

d. The battalion order and commander's intent should define for the companies what the scheme of maneuver is, what the priorities are, and how much freedom the subordinate leaders have in maneuvering their forces. The battalion commander usually gives a company commander very little freedom, unless the company is delaying on an avenue of approach that is essentially isolated. The battalion commander specifies constraints on maneuver and requirements for coordination. He defines the criteria for disengagement and movement to subsequent positions or areas and a series of battle positions, checkpoints, or phase lines from which, or forward of which, the company must fight.

5-15. ALTERNATE AND SUBSEQUENT POSITIONS IN A DELAY

In planning, if the commander chooses to delay using battle positions, he can use either alternate positions or subsequent positions. In both techniques, the delaying forces maintain contact with the enemy between delay positions. Table 5-1 shows the advantages and disadvantages of the two techniques.

METHOD OF DELAY	USE WHEN. . .	ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Delay from subsequent positions.	AO is wide. Forces available are not adequate to be positioned in depth.	Reduced fratricide risk. Ease of C2. Repeated rearward passages not required.	Limited depth to the delay positions. Easier to penetrate or isolate units. Less time is available to prepare each position. Less flexibility.
Delay from alternate positions.	AO is narrow. Forces are adequate to be positioned in depth.	Allows positioning in depth. Harder for enemy to isolate units. More flexibility.	More difficult C2; requires continuous coordination. Requires passage of lines, increasing vulnerability and fratricide potential.

Table 5-1. Comparison of methods of delay.

a. **Delay from Alternate Positions.** In a delay from alternate positions (Figure 5-5, page 5-26), two or more units in a single AO occupy delaying positions in depth. As the first unit engages the enemy, the second occupies the next position in depth and prepares to assume responsibility for the operation. The first force disengages and passes around or through the second force. It then moves to the next position and prepares to reengage the enemy while the second force takes up the fight. Both the SBCT and battalion can use this scheme of maneuver. At the SBCT level, if the AO is narrow, the SBCT employs

battalions in depth occupying alternate positions. This enables the SBCT to develop a strong delay, with forces available to counterattack or assist in the disengagement of the battalion in contact. At the battalion level, using alternate positions helps maintain pressure on the enemy and helps prevent platoons or companies from being decisively engaged. A delay from alternate positions is particularly useful on the most dangerous avenues of approach because it offers greater security and depth than a delay from subsequent positions. However, it also poses the highest potential for fratricide and vulnerability as units pass through or near each other.

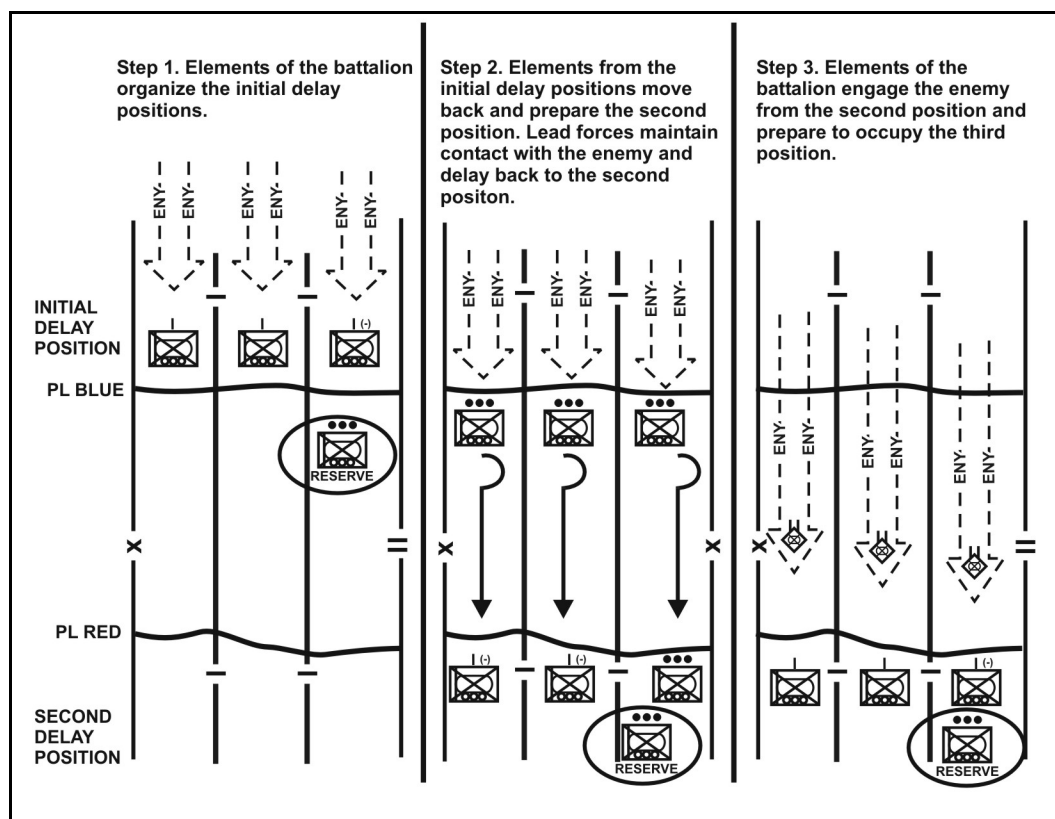


Figure 5-5. Delay from alternate positions.

b. **Delay from Subsequent Positions.** The battalion uses a delay from subsequent positions (Figure 5-6) when the assigned AO is so wide that available forces cannot occupy more than a single tier of positions. This is the more common form of a delay operation given the expanded battlespace in which the SBCT and battalions normally operate. In a delay from subsequent positions, the majority of forces are arrayed along the same phase line or series of BPs. The forward forces delay the enemy from one PL to the next within their assigned AOs. At battalion level, this is the least preferred method of delaying since there is a much higher probability of forces becoming isolated or decisively engaged, particularly if the delay must be maintained over more than one or two subsequent positions. Additionally, the battalion has limited ability to maintain pressure on the enemy as it disengages and moves to subsequent positions unless it has been allocated additional (and adequate) indirect fire support.

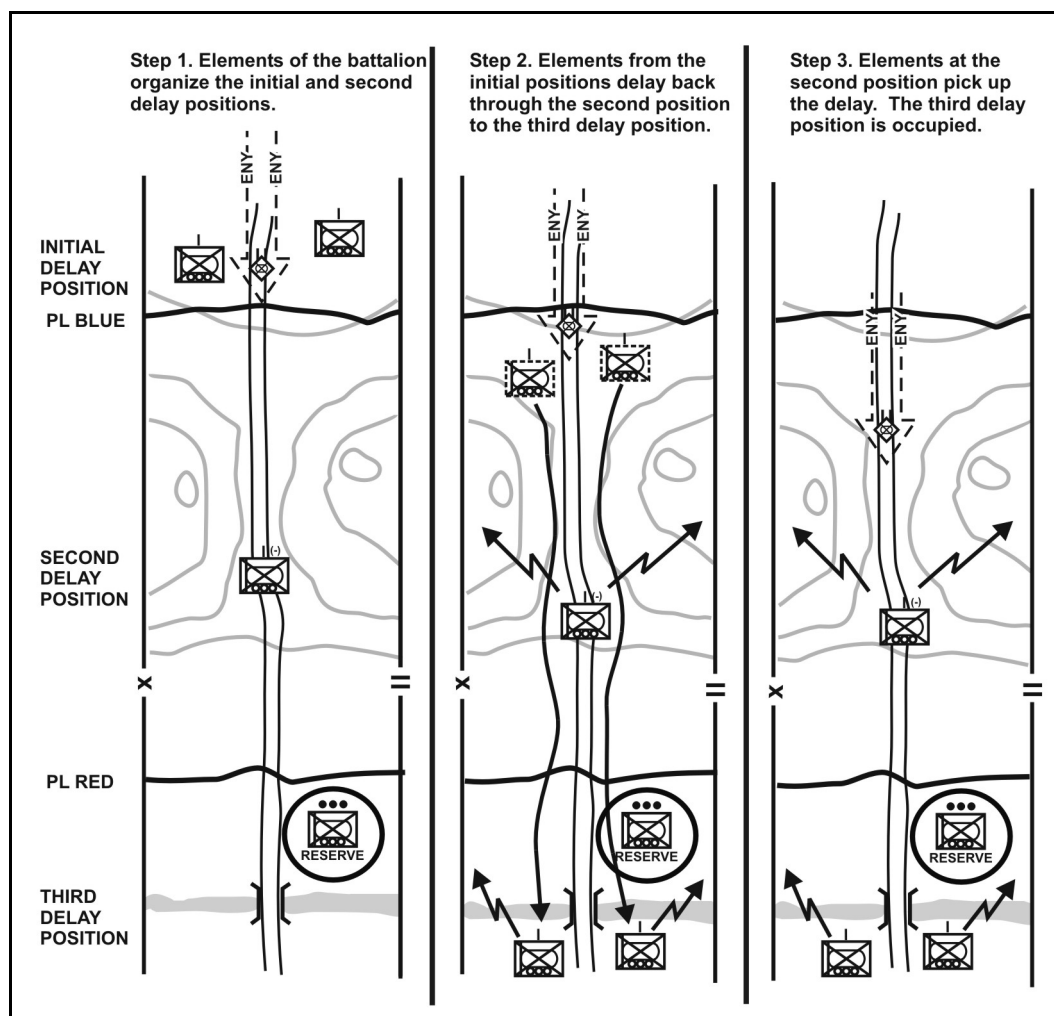


Figure 5-6. Delay from subsequent positions.

5-16. FIRE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

The following are key considerations for the fire support plan:

- Attack the enemy throughout the AO.
- Engage the enemy with fires to inflict casualties and disrupt his approach before he gets to friendly delaying positions. Plan final protective fires (FPFs) for each series of delaying positions to support disengagement.
- Integrate fires of the battalion mortars into all fire plans.
- Mass fires on high-payoff targets and canalizing terrain to limit the momentum of the enemy's attack.
- Ensure fires are tied to obstacles.
- Plan and designate priority targets along routes from one delaying position to the next.
- Mass all available fire support to support disengagements.
- Use smoke to screen friendly movements and for deception.

5-17. ENGINEER SUPPORT IN A DELAY

The following are key considerations for the scheme of engineer operations:

- When operating within a large AO, task-organize countermobility assets to companies, decentralizing control and execution.
- Task-organize mobility assets to companies to support mobility requirements. Consider logistical requirements and support of CSS assets in task-organizing mobility assets.
- Develop the obstacle plan to support disengagement of delaying forces and to shape the enemy's maneuver to meet the commander's intent. Consider countermobility requirements for all delaying positions throughout the depth of the AO. Integrate SCATMINES at delay positions to support disengagement and movement to subsequent positions.
- Consider the impact of the obstacle effort on the movement of friendly forces and future operations. Develop obstacle restrictions, establish lanes and guides, and employ situational or reserve obstacles to support mobility requirements. Provide for closing lanes behind friendly forces with scatterable or hand-emplaced mines.
- Develop clear criteria for execution of situational and reserve obstacles. Integrate decisions for their execution in the decision support template.
- Construct survivability positions in depth, as required, to support repositioning forces.

5-18. AIR DEFENSE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

The following are key considerations for the air defense plan:

- Synchronize the movement and positioning of ADA assets with the delaying forces.
- Ensure adequate air defense coverage of friendly forces during movements from one delaying position to another. Consider protection along movement routes, chokepoints, and bridges that friendly forces intend to use.

5-19. NUCLEAR, BIOLOGICAL, AND CHEMICAL SUPPORT IN A DELAY

Brigade planning defines NBC operations in the delay. Battalions may coordinate for reconnaissance assets if available in the SBCT. Decontamination operations in the delay focus on individual and crew operational decontamination procedures until the conclusion of the operation, when thorough decontamination can be accomplished. If smoke generators are available, the battalion may employ them for deception, obscuring movement and positions, or obscuring portions of the battlefield to reduce enemy visibility and ease of movement.

5-20. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT IN A DELAY

CSS for a delay is particularly complex. Communication within the CSS system, accurately tracking the battle, and anticipating support requirements are especially important. The following are key CSS planning considerations:

- Keep the CSS assets mobile and supplies uploaded.
- Task-organize additional ambulances and recovery vehicles to the companies. Request heavy equipment transports (HETs) to support rapid evacuation of damaged equipment.
- Emphasize maintenance support forward with short evacuation times; use all available assets (to include firepower-damaged vehicles) to evacuate damaged vehicles to the rear.
- Synchronize refueling and resupply operations with the scheme of maneuver and the anticipated enemy situation to ensure continuity of support. Increase emergency Class III and V supplies positioned forward.
- Do not coordinate for throughput too far forward, which might cause assets to be caught in the fight or add to route congestion. Depending on the situation, this may not apply during the initial preparations for the delay.
- Plan routes for CSS assets that do not conflict with maneuver elements.

5-21. DELAY PREPARATIONS

Defensive preparations discussed in Section II also apply during the conduct of a delay.

a. **Inspections.** The commander inspects planning and preparations of his subordinate units to ensure--

- Maneuver, fire, and obstacle plans are consistent with his intent.
- Flank coordination between delaying companies is conducted to maintain cohesion and mutual support during the delay.
- Defensive preparations are proceeding according to established timelines.
- All leaders have a clear understanding of the scheme of maneuver and the commander's intent.

b. **Rehearsals.** When conducting a rehearsal for a delay, key leaders practice the operation against all feasible enemy COAs to promote flexibility of decision-making, plans, and execution. The commander examines each subordinate unit commander's plan as he fights the delay during the rehearsal and pays close attention to the following:

- Direct and indirect fire instructions.
- Timing of movements (to include during periods of limited visibility) and delaying actions from one position to the next with special attention paid to the disengagement criteria.
- Means and methods of disengaging from the enemy and maintaining contact with the enemy as the force moves to subsequent positions.
- Execution of situational and reserve obstacles to include closure of lanes.
- Movement times, routes, and positioning of CS and CSS assets.

The commander also rehearses plans to deal with potential reverses such as enemy penetrations and unanticipated decisive engagement. The rehearsal serves to further synchronize the movement of combat forces, CS, and CSS units. It is especially important to portray movement times and required routes realistically during the rehearsal to identify potential conflicts.

5-22. EXECUTION OF A DELAY

The battalion moves key forces and support assets to prepare for the delay. This initial movement includes movement into the security area and MBA.

a. **Security Area Actions.** Delaying forces normally occupy the FLOT without a security force to their front. If the SBCT can create a security area force for a delay, the battalion may position the reconnaissance platoon in a screen behind the SBCT force to maintain observation, provide early warning, and to adjust indirect fires to continue the disruption and attrition of the attacking enemy. As the enemy closes into and through the security area, the screening forces move back through or around the initial main body positions to subsequent positions that allow them to observe the main battle area and assist in the disengagement and movement of forces to their next positions.

b. **Main Battle Area Engagement.** The battalion uses fires and obstacles to force the enemy to deploy and attack. Its masses effects quickly for a short period to inflict the maximum damage on the enemy at the maximum range. To avoid decisive engagement, the battalion must disengage before the enemy can breach obstacles or mass effective fire on the delay position. Observers positioned to the flanks in depth continue to observe and shift indirect fires as forces delay to subsequent positions. Companies may move by bounds within the battalion or company to maintain direct fires on the enemy and cover movement. Short, intense engagements at near maximum range with sustained indirect fires and covering obscurants are the key to successful delay operations.

c. **Controlling the Delay.** The battalion commander must closely control the disposition, displacement, and maneuver of his forces in order to maintain the cohesion of the delay operation and keep the entire battalion synchronized with the remainder of the SBCT. FBCB2 represents a major advantage in force tracking. Given the potential for loss of positive control, it is critical that the commander clearly establish parameters for displacement.

(1) As it executes the delay, the battalion and company commanders must continually assess their situations and requirements to displace with the following considerations:

- What are the size, activity, and location of attacking enemy forces? Are elements of the battalion threatened with decisive engagement or bypass?
- What is the status of adjacent units?
- Are supporting assets, particularly artillery and mortars, postured to support movement? If not, how long will it take them to be ready?
- Are the obstacles supporting the present position still intact and effective?
- Are direct and indirect fires effective?
- How strong is this position in relation to other positions the force might occupy?
- What is the ammunition status?
- Are displacement routes clear?

(2) The battalion must always make decisions about displacement and timing in the context of the commander's intent and priority for the delay (for example, is time more important than force preservation, or vice versa?). In many instances, the battalion or elements of it must accept decisive engagement to execute the mission and then break contact as the situation permits or in conjunction with another force's counterattack.

d. **Counterattacks.** The battalion can rarely execute a substantial counterattack during a delay by itself unless it is part of the larger SBCT scheme of maneuver. Generally, counterattacks executed by the battalion in its own scheme of maneuver are platoon- to possibly company-size counterattacks to support disengagement of forces or to destroy penetrations. Whenever possible, the SBCT executes counterattacks to counter

penetrations, to gain a temporary degree of initiative or freedom of action, and to avoid a predictable pattern of operation.

e. **Decisive Engagement.** The battalion and companies avoid becoming decisively engaged except when necessary to prevent the enemy from reaching a specified area too early or when a part of the force must be risked to protect the entire force. If elements of the battalion are threatened with decisive engagement or have become decisively engaged, the commander may take actions to support their disengagement. In order of priority, he may do any of the following:

- Allocate priority of all supporting fires to the threatened unit. This is the most rapid and responsive means of increasing the unit's combat power.
- Employ CAS or attack helicopters to suppress the enemy and restore freedom of maneuver to the battalion.
- Reinforce the unit. In a delay mission, particularly in a large AO, the battalion may not be able to do this quickly enough with ground maneuver forces.
- Conduct a counterattack to disengage the unit.

Once forces have become decisively engaged, they must not break contact without adequate measures by the battalion to prevent the enemy from rapidly pursuing and destroying the force piecemeal.

f. **Terminate the Delay.** A delay mission ends with another planned mission such as a defense, withdrawal, or attack. Ideally, an SBCT or battalion that has been delaying conducts a rearward passage of lines through the established defense of another friendly force. Digitized C2 makes this difficult operation far less dangerous than it is with analog C2. The battalion executes its actions in the context of the SBCT's actions. If it defeats the enemy attack during the delay, the SBCT may--

- Maintain contact while another force counterattacks.
- Withdraw to perform another mission.
- Transition to the offense.

In all cases, the commander must plan for the expected outcome of the delay based on the situation and the higher commander's plan.

5-23. WITHDRAWAL

Withdrawal is a planned operation in which a force in contact disengages from an enemy force. Withdrawals may or may not be conducted under enemy pressure. Withdrawals are either assisted or unassisted.

a. **Assisted.** The assisting force occupies positions to the rear of the withdrawing unit and prepares to accept control of the situation. It can also assist the withdrawing unit with route reconnaissance, route maintenance, fire support, and CSS. Both forces closely coordinate the withdrawal. After coordination, the withdrawing unit delays to a battle handover line, conducts a passage of lines, and moves to its final destination.

b. **Unassisted.** The withdrawing unit establishes routes and develops plans for the withdrawal, then establishes a security force as the rear guard while the main body withdraws. CSS and CS elements normally withdraw first, followed by combat forces. To deceive the enemy as to the friendly movement, the SBCT or battalion may establish a detachment left in contact if withdrawing under enemy pressure. As the unit withdraws, the detachment left in contact disengages from the enemy and follows the main body to its final destination.

5-24. WITHDRAWAL ORGANIZATION

As with the delay, how the battalion structures its force is a function of how the SBCT organizes. The SBCT normally organizes into a security force, main body, and reserve. It may elect to use a single battalion or elements of a battalion as the security or reserve force. It may also organize a detachment left in contact or stay-behind forces if required by the enemy situation. If operating independently, the battalion organizes itself in the same manner. FBCB2 is a major asset in withdrawals, and the battalion should plan for its continuous operations before withdrawals.

a. **Security Force.** The security force maintains contact with the enemy until ordered to disengage or until another force takes over the task. It simulates the continued presence of the main body, which requires additional allocation of combat multipliers beyond that normally allocated to a force of its size. When withdrawing under enemy pressure, the security force establishes or operates as a detachment left in contact to provide a way to break contact from the enemy sequentially. When conducting the withdrawal without enemy pressure, the security force acts as a rear guard because the most probable threat is a pursuing enemy.

b. **Detachment Left In Contact.** The detachment left in contact (DLIC) is an element that is left in contact as part of the previously designated (usually rear) security force while the main body conducts its withdrawal. Its purpose is to remain behind to deceive the enemy into believing the SBCT or battalion is still in position while the majority of the unit withdraws. The detachment left in contact should be one of the strongest of the subordinate units with the most capable leadership. It will be the unit under the greatest pressure, and the success of the withdrawal often depends on its effectiveness. The commander must establish specific instructions about what to do if the enemy attacks and when and under what circumstances to delay or withdraw. The SBCT organizes a detachment left in contact in one of three ways (Figure 5-7).

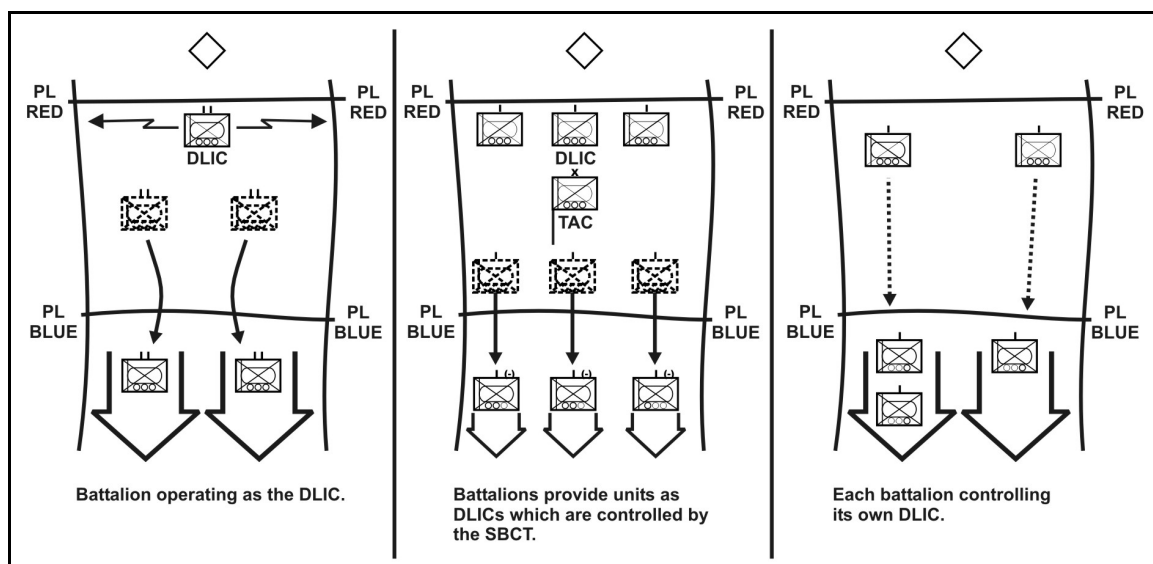


Figure 5-7. Methods for organizing the detachment left in contact.

(1) **Single Battalion.** A single battalion operates as the detachment left in contact. This is the most effective option since it provides for effective task organization and C2.

(2) **DLIC Element Formed from each Battalion.** Each battalion provides forces for the detachment-left-in-contact mission. The resulting DLIC element then operates under the SBCT's control. This is the least desirable option since it complicates C2 and task organization and requires significant changes to the communications architecture. The SBCT most commonly uses this option when the subordinate battalions have lost significant portions of their command and control capabilities.

(3) **Battalion Control of Separate DLICs.** Each battalion establishes and controls its individual detachment left in contact. The SBCT uses this option when it is operating over a wider area or one with multiple corridors in the withdrawal AO. It allows for effective dispersion of forces while maintaining standard C2 relationships.

c. **Company DLIC.** When the battalion is the DLIC or has its own DLIC (subparagraphs 1 and 3 above), it normally gives the mission to a company. Again, the company left in contact should be the most capable of the subordinate units. The battalion should establish an advance guard on its route of movement. It may designate a company or the reconnaissance platoon reinforced with MGS, infantry, and mortars as the advance guard. The battalion should task-organize both the DLIC and the advance guard with engineers, with mobility assets going to the advance guard and obstacle and mobility assets going to the DLIC. The battalion main body consists of the remaining companies, command posts, CSS assets, remaining engineers, and the mortars (if they are not task-organized to support either the DLIC or the advance guard). The battalion may designate a reserve platoon from the single company in the main body. To create flank security, it uses the reconnaissance platoon, engineers, or elements of the main body team.

5-25. WITHDRAWAL PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Because the force is most vulnerable if the enemy attacks, the commander and staff normally plan for a withdrawal under enemy pressure. It also develops contingency plans for a withdrawal without enemy pressure.

a. **Planning Considerations.** During planning, the commander and staff specifically consider the following:

- Disengagement criteria (time, friendly situation, enemy situation).
- Plan for a deliberate break in contact from the enemy.
- Plan for deception to conceal the withdrawal for as long as possible.
- Rapid displacement of the main body, safeguarded from enemy interference.
- Selection and protection of withdrawal routes and alternates.
- Siting of obstacles behind the DLIC to complicate pursuit.

b. **Commander's Intent.** The commander develops his vision of the battle based on withdrawing under enemy pressure. He must determine the composition and strength of the security force, main body, and reserve. The commander must clearly define how he intends to deceive the enemy as to the execution of the withdrawal; how he intends to disengage from the enemy (use of maneuver, fires, and obstacles); and the final end state of the operation in terms of time, location, and disposition of forces.

5-26. WITHDRAWAL SCHEME OF MANEUVER

A withdrawal may be assisted or unassisted and may take place with or without enemy pressure. The plan considers which of the variations the battalion faces based on the higher headquarters' order and the enemy situation.

a. **Assisted Withdrawal.** In an assisted withdrawal, the staff coordinates the following with the assisting force:

- Actions of the assisting security force that the battalion will pass through or around.
- Reconnaissance of withdrawal routes.
- Forces to secure choke points or key terrain along the withdrawal routes.
- Elements to assist in movement control, such as traffic control points.
- Required combat, CS, and CSS to assist the withdrawing battalion in disengaging from the enemy.

b. **Unassisted Withdrawal.** In an unassisted withdrawal, the battalion establishes its own security and disengages itself from the enemy. It reconnoiters and secures routes that it uses in its rearward movement while sustaining itself during the withdrawal.

c. **Withdrawal under Enemy Pressure.** In a withdrawal under enemy pressure, all units other than the rear guard or DLIC withdraw simultaneously when available routes allow. The following factors influence the decision to withdraw simultaneously:

- Subsequent missions.
- Availability of transportation assets and routes.
- Disposition of friendly and enemy forces.
- Level and nature of enemy pressure.
- Degree of urgency associated with the withdrawal.

(1) **Transition.** The element that will be the DLIC or rear guard must transition to cover the battalion's AO. Simultaneously, the battalion must prepare its CSS assets and the remainder of the force to begin a rapid withdrawal to the rear. The battalion should seek to move on two routes to gain speed and shorten formations. Using more than two routes exceeds the ability of the battalion to maintain security. Often, only a single route will be available.

(2) **Breaking Contact.** The battalion commander has essentially two options for breaking contact--break contact using deception and stealth or break contact quickly and violently under the cover of supporting fires reinforced by obstacles to delay pursuit. He bases this choice on the factors of METT-TC.

d. **Withdrawal without Enemy Pressure.** When conducting a withdrawal without enemy pressure, the commander can focus the plan on the best method to displace forces rapidly. He has the option of taking calculated risks that increase his force's displacement capabilities. He may order the main body to conduct a tactical road march instead of moving in tactical formations, or he may move on as many routes as are available with reduced security in order to gain speed.

5-27. WITHDRAWAL PREPARATION

The commander prepares the battalion for the withdrawal through inspections and rehearsals in the same fashion as discussed with other defensive operations. Inspections for this mission focus on subordinate unit preparations to ensure a clear understanding of the scheme of maneuver and his intent. During an assisted withdrawal, the commander ensures adequate coordination for battle handover and passage of lines. The focus of the rehearsal for the withdrawal is on actions to maintain security, disengagement from the enemy, and the movement of forces. When possible, key leaders or liaisons from the assisting force should attend the rehearsal. The commander ensures control measures, to include fire support coordination measures, fully support the withdrawal. Leaders rehearse the plan against the full range of possible enemy actions. They rehearse contingencies for reverting to a delay, commitment of the reserve, and enemy interdiction of movement routes.

5-28. WITHDRAWAL EXECUTION

Execution of the battalion withdrawal essentially follows this pattern:

- a. Task-organizing and positioning of security and deception forces.
- b. Reconnaissance and surveillance of withdrawal routes and subsequent positions.

- c. Preparation of obstacles to support the DLIC and withdrawal.
- d. Preparing wounded soldiers and damaged equipment and nonessential supplies for movement.
- e. Moving nonessential CS and CSS units to the rear.
- f. Initiating movement, leading with forward security forces.
- g. DLIC breaks off contact and moves as a rear guard.

5-29. CONCEALING THE WITHDRAWAL

The first priority is to conceal the withdrawal from the enemy. As the battalion begins the initial movement of forces, it must take measures to deceive the enemy and to maintain OPSEC. The following actions assist in maintaining OPSEC:

- Maintain the defensive pattern of the whole force across the AO, simulated by the DLIC.
- Maintain communication and information security.
- Avoid establishing patterns of movement that may indicate friendly intentions.
- Establish security focused on destroying enemy reconnaissance forces.
- Use multiple withdrawal routes.
- Move during limited visibility and along covered and concealed routes.

5-30. DISENGAGEMENT IN A WITHDRAWAL

The security force remains in position and maintains a deception while the main body moves as rapidly as possible rearward to intermediate or final positions. After the main body withdraws a safe distance, the commander orders the security force to begin its rearward movement. Once the security force begins moving, it assumes the duties of a rear guard. The security element must balance security and deception with speed as it disengages. It maintains tactical movement and security techniques until it is clear that the enemy is not pursuing and contact has been broken; it then withdraws as rapidly as possible. The main body moves rapidly on multiple routes to designated positions. It may occupy a series of intermediate positions before completing the withdrawal. Usually CS and CSS units move first and precede combat units in the movement formation. The staff enforces the disciplined use of routes during the withdrawal. Despite confusion and enemy pressure, subordinate units must follow specified routes and movement times.

5-31. ACTIONS ON CONTACT IN A WITHDRAWAL

Security forces counter any enemy attempts to disrupt the withdrawal or pursue the battalion. If the security force and the reserve cannot prevent the enemy from closing on the main body, the commander commits some or all of the main body to prevent the enemy from interfering further with the withdrawal. The main body delays, attacks, or defends as required by the situation. In this event, the withdrawal resumes at the earliest possible time. If the enemy blocks movement to the rear, friendly forces shift to alternate routes and bypass the interdicted area. Alternatively, they may attack through the enemy.

5-32. TERMINATING THE WITHDRAWAL

Once the battalion successfully disengages from the enemy, it normally has the following options:

- Rejoin the overall defense.

- Transition into a retirement.
- Continue moving away from the enemy and towards its next mission area.

The higher headquarters defines the next mission. Follow-on missions are normally planned as the withdrawal is being planned or executed.

5-33. RETIREMENT

A retirement is a retrograde operation in which a force that is not in contact with the enemy moves to the rear in an organized manner. The battalion conducts a retirement as part of the SBCT to reposition for future operations.

a. **Organization.** The SBCT normally organizes into security elements and a main body. A subordinate battalion may serve either as a security element or as a part of the main body. The battalion normally organizes itself with security, main body, and reserve elements, depending on the situation and where the battalion is in the movement scheme. The formation and number of columns employed depend on the number of available routes and the potential for enemy interference. The commander typically wants to move his major elements to the rear simultaneously.

b. **Planning Considerations.** The commander and staff develop a movement plan based on the terrain, friendly situation, commander's guidance, and enemy situation. They develop the movement formation and order of movement to balance the need for security and speed. Security forces protect the main body from surprise, harassment, or attack by any pursuing enemy forces. Each march column normally maintains an advance guard, rear guard, and flank security, depending on the situation with adjacent friendly forces and the likelihood of enemy interference. The main body may organize into an approach march or tactical road march if speed is most important and the need for security is low.

c. **Preparation.** During preparations, the SBCT and battalion units conduct rehearsals and prepare for the movement. Units maintain OPSEC and security operations and dispatch advance parties and quartering parties as required.

d. **Execution.** During a retirement, the SBCT and its battalions normally move to assembly areas to prepare for future operations. Battalions move in accordance with established movement times and routes. Strict adherence to the movement plan is essential to avoid congestion. The staff closely supervises the execution of the movement plan. CSS and CS units usually move to the rear first.

Section III. DEFENSIVE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Planning a defensive operation is a complex effort requiring detailed planning and extensive coordination. This section contains planning considerations applicable for defensive operations.

5-34. DEFENSIVE PLANNING STEPS

In the defense, synchronizing the effects of the battalion combat and supporting systems allows a commander to apply overwhelming combat power against selected advancing enemy forces to unhinge the enemy commander's plan and destroy his combined-arms team. All defensive operations are a mix of static and dynamic actions. As an operation evolves, the commander knows he will probably have to shift his decisive and shaping operations to press the fight and keep the enemy off balance.

a. **Commander's Vision.** The first step is the expression of the commander's visualization of anticipated enemy actions integrated with the staff's IPB. The battalion IPB and the SBCT IPB should not differ significantly, thus giving the battalion commander and staff a clear understanding of how the SBCT commander envisions the enemy will fight and his plan for the operation. From that, the battalion commander and staff refine the IPB to focus on the details of the operation in the battalion AO. The SBCT commander normally defines where and how the SBCT will defeat or destroy the enemy. The battalion commander defines how he envisions the battalion will execute its portion of the SBCT fight.

b. **How and Where to Defeat the Enemy.** The commander and staff base their determination of how and where to defeat the enemy on where they believe the enemy will go, the terrain, and the forces available. The SBCT commander may define a defeat mechanism that includes the use of single or multiple counterattacks to achieve success. The battalion commander and staff analyze their unit's role in the SBCT fight and determine how to achieve success. In an area defense, the battalion usually achieves success by massing the cumulative effects of obstacles and fires to defeat the enemy forward of a designated area, often in conjunction with an SBCT counterattack. In a delay operation, the battalion achieves success by combining maneuver, fires, and obstacles, and by avoiding decisive engagement until conditions are right to achieve the desired effect of gaining time or shaping the battlefield for a higher echelon counterattack.

c. **Forces and Assets Available.** The commander and staff analyze the forces and assets available, paying particular attention to the obstacle assets and fire support allocated by the SBCT. The staff must define the engineer and fire support allocation in terms of capability. For example, it should define engineer capability in terms of the number of obstacles of a specific effect engineers can emplace in the time available. Fire support analysis should include the number of targets that can be engaged with an expected result at what point in the battle.

d. **Effects.** With a definitive understanding of the assets available, the commander and staff determine what effects forces, fires, and obstacles must achieve on enemy formations by avenue of approach and how these effects will support both the SBCT's and the battalion's defeat mechanism. They define the task(s) and purpose for subordinate units and establish priorities for CS and CSS. They develop obstacle and fire support plans concurrently with the defensive force array, again defining a task and purpose for each obstacle and target in keeping with the commander's stated EFSTs and intended obstacle effects. The desired end state is a plan which defines how the commander intends to mass the effects of direct and indirect fires with obstacles and use of terrain to shape the battlefield and defeat or destroy the enemy.

5-35. INTELLIGENCE PREPARATION OF THE BATTLEFIELD

As with all tactical planning, IPB is a critical part of defensive planning. It helps the commander to define where to concentrate combat power, where to accept risk, and where to plan potential decisive actions. To aid in the development of a flexible defensive plan, the IPB must present all feasible enemy courses of action. The essential areas of focus are--

- Analyze terrain.
- Determine enemy force size and likely COAs with associated decision points.

- Determine enemy vulnerabilities.

a. **Terrain Analysis.** The staff determines ground and air mobility corridors and avenues of approach to determine where the enemy can maneuver to reach his likely objectives and to identify limitations on friendly maneuver and positioning. Identification of terrain, such as chokepoints, that create potential enemy vulnerabilities and opportunities for friendly attack is critical. The SBCT engineer can assist the battalion staff's terrain analysis by providing terrain analysis products utilizing the digital topographic support system, which can help in identifying critical terrain as well as assist in positioning weapons systems and intelligence assets. Once they receive their area of operation for reconnaissance or preparation, subordinate units can conduct their own terrain analysis using physical reconnaissance and the line-of-sight analysis function in FBCB2. The terrain analysis must achieve a level of fidelity that allows for effective positioning of direct fire weapons systems and observers. It must identify intervisibility lines, fields of fire, and dead spaces and integrate the effects of weather. The SBCT staff can assist the battalion staff by supplying weather impact on trafficability, visibility, and systems operations through data generated by the integrated meteorological system (IMETS) at division. The result of the terrain analysis should be a modified combined obstacle overlay and identification of defensible areas. The staff should transmit results of the analysis digitally to subordinate units. When it has analyzed the battalion's assigned AO, the staff should expand its analysis to adjacent AOs and areas forward and to the rear of the assigned AO in which the battalion may operate as the operation progresses.

b. **Determine Enemy Force Size, Likely COAs, and Decision Points.** The staff determines the size of enemy force that each avenue of approach and mobility corridor can support. The expected size of the enemy force drives the determination of friendly force allocation, fires, and obstacle effort. It also assists the commander and staff in understanding how the enemy will utilize his forces and the terrain. The enemy COAs developed must be feasible and reflect the enemy's flexibility and true potential. All COAs should define the following:

- Likely enemy objectives.
- Enemy composition, disposition, and strength.
- Schemes of maneuver, to include routes, formations, locations and times the enemy may change formations, possible maneuver options available to the enemy, and key decision points.
- Time and distance factors for the enemy's maneuver through the area of operation.
- Likely employment of all enemy combat multipliers including artillery, air defense, obstacles, chemical strikes, dynamic obstacles, and attack aircraft.
- Likely use of all enemy reconnaissance assets and organizations to include likely reconnaissance objectives, reconnaissance avenues of approach, times to expect enemy reconnaissance, and likely locations of enemy observers and observation posts.
- Identification and likely locations of enemy high-value targets, such as artillery formations, reserves, and C2 nodes.
- Likely locations, compositions, strength, employment options, and time and distance factors for enemy reserves and follow-on forces.

- Locations of enemy decision points that determine selection of a specific course of action.
- Likely breach sites and points of penetration.

The staff should graphically portray the results of this IPB step on a situation template (SITE MP) with a COA statement and appropriate notes. The S2 and staff use this SITE MP to develop the initial reconnaissance and surveillance plan that initiates reconnaissance and surveillance operations. As planning progresses, they must update the reconnaissance and surveillance plan to include fire support operations, resulting in a complete reconnaissance and surveillance plan. The staff should distribute all products digitally to the entire staff and subordinate units to support parallel planning.

c. **Determine Enemy Vulnerabilities.** The staff identifies potential enemy vulnerabilities based on the enemy's tactics, friendly and enemy capabilities, the terrain, and the weather. Seeking to engage the enemy where the terrain puts him at a disadvantage, the staff identifies--

- Restricted terrain that may slow the enemy's attack, cause a separation of forces, create difficulties in command and control, or force the enemy to conduct defile drills (for example, narrow valleys, passes, or urban areas).
- Chokepoints or natural obstacles that may cause a loss of momentum, a potential fragmenting of forces, or a vulnerable concentration of forces (for example, rivers and canals).
- Terrain that canalizes enemy formations into areas that provide defending forces with good fields of fire, observation, and flanking fires.
- Areas dominated by key or defensible terrain that allows massing of fires.

To be successful at providing IPB products to support the commander and subordinate units, the entire staff must participate. They must be knowledgeable in friendly and enemy capabilities and terrain analysis and be able to execute the process rapidly. The results must be detailed, legible, and disseminated quickly to support planning at all echelons.

5-36. COURSE OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT

The following are basic steps for developing a COA for defensive operations:

- Analyze relative combat power.
- Generate options.
- Array initial forces.
- Develop the scheme of maneuver.
- Assign headquarters.
- Prepare COA statements and sketches.

Refer to Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of the MDMP.

NOTE: This process is often abbreviated depending on the situation and the commander. Frequently, the commander may develop the course of action himself and have the staff focus on war gaming and synchronization.

a. **Analyze Relative Combat Power.** The commander and staff analyze friendly and enemy combat power to gain insight on capabilities, limitations, and weaknesses associated with both forces. They consider the elements of combat power (maneuver,

firepower, protection, leadership, and information) along with the effects of combat multipliers (obscurants, chemical, intelligence and electronic warfare (IEW), and logistical capabilities). In the defense, they pay particular attention to the potential created by the terrain and the battalion's countermobility and survivability capabilities and to the enemy's actual ability to employ forces in each defended area. They analyze each avenue of approach. This analysis, coupled with higher commander's intent and the terrain, often determines whether the battalion defends forward in the AO or integrates delay actions into the defensive scheme in order to shape the battlefield and maintain adequate force ratios.

b. **Generate Options.** Defensive COAs must account for all possible enemy actions and must provide for the full extent of the battalion fight. Since the defender cedes the initiative at first and generally fights at a numerical disadvantage, full utilization of available combat power is normally a major concern. The following guidelines can help generate defensive options.

(1) Ensure the entire staff understands the mission and the results of the mission analysis process.

(2) Determine the desired end state of the mission in terms of the higher commander's intent and concept and the battalion's relation to the enemy, terrain, and time. Depending on the purpose of the defense, the end state may focus on retention of terrain or defeat of an enemy force.

(3) Study the terrain and feasible enemy COAs to determine where and how to defeat the enemy attack. This should result in--

- Determination of the MBA, security area, and rear area.
- Determination of the defeat mechanism (main effort), including task(s) and purpose.
- Identification of key effects required to shape the enemy's attack and create the conditions for the main effort's success. This defines supporting efforts, fires, and obstacles and must include the task(s) and purpose of each of these.
- Determination of key terrain the battalion must retain or control.
- Determination of where to engage enemy formations.
- Areas of risk.

c. **Array Initial Forces.** The commander and staff array forces within the MBA, security area, and rear area, starting with the main effort and followed by each supporting effort. Guidelines for this process include the following:

- Based on the probable size of the enemy force on each avenue of approach, identify the required combat forces, the EFSTs, and the obstacle effects required for each effort (main or supporting) to accomplish its task.
- Allocate the number and type forces required by each effort to accomplish its task and purpose. Weight additional combat power not needed to the main effort or keep it in reserve.
- Balance the required combat forces, EFSTs, and obstacle effects with available capabilities based on the commander's guidance and the most likely enemy COA.
- Array company-size maneuver units against battalion-size avenues of approach. Consider allocation of maneuver platoons.
- Array CS and CSS assets based on requirements, not sizes of units.

- Allocate the types of forces to each effort that make best use of the forces' capabilities and available weapons systems.
- Weight the main effort with sufficient combat power to ensure it can achieve its task and purpose.
- Allocate minimum combat power required for supporting efforts to achieve their assigned tasks.
- Array and allocate reconnaissance and surveillance forces and security forces.

NOTE: The battalion can overcome shortfalls in combat power by modifying the COA, changing task organization, increasing use of combat multipliers, or using economy of force elsewhere.

d. **Develop the Scheme of Maneuver.** The commander and staff develop the scheme of maneuver by refining the initial array of forces to coordinate the operation and show the relationship of friendly forces to each other, the enemy, and the terrain. They simultaneously develop and refine other supporting plans such as fire support and engineer support. It is critical that the plan developed be sufficiently flexible to succeed against all feasible enemy COAs and be capable of defeating major enemy efforts along unlikely avenues of approach or against supporting efforts. The scheme of maneuver must also address how to exploit defensive success. A fully developed defensive scheme of maneuver--

- Identifies where and when the commander will accept risk.
- Identifies critical events and, if required, phases of the operation.
- Designates the main effort with associated task(s) and purpose(s), by phase.
- Designates supporting efforts with associated task(s) and purpose(s), defining how they support the main effort.
- Designates the reserve and its planning priorities.
- Defines reconnaissance and surveillance operations.
- Defines security operations.
- Provides for withdrawal of the security force.
- Outlines the movement and positioning of forces (including effects of the SBCT reserve's movement through or commitment in the battalion AO).
- Describes the concept of fires.
- Integrates obstacle effects with maneuver and fires.
- Establishes the priority of support for CS and CSS units.
- Identifies the maneuver options that may develop during execution.
- Identifies means and mechanisms for exploiting defensive success.

e. **Assign Headquarters.** With the scheme of maneuver developed, the commander and staff determine the task organization and C2 arrangement of subordinate headquarters. The task organization must account for the entire battlefield framework and include arrangements for special operations such as passage of lines. The assignment of headquarters must pay particular attention to the impact on the C2 INFOSYS and the requirements to move unit affiliations within the communications architecture.

f. **Prepare COA Statements and Sketches.** The staff develops a COA sketch and explanatory statement for each completed COA. All COAs must meet the criteria of

suitability, feasibility, acceptability, distinguishability, and completeness as defined in FM 101-5. The staff should simultaneously develop supporting plans (fire support, engineer, air defense).

Section IV. SEQUENCE OF THE DEFENSE

The battalion may assume a defensive mission following an attack of its own or in anticipation of an enemy attack. The following general sequence of operations applies to planning and executing all defensive operations.

5-37. OCCUPATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY

Normally, the SBCT has established some form of security before the battalion moves into the area. However, the battalion must still provide for its own security, especially on expanded or complex terrain. If transitioning from an offensive operation, the SBCT and battalions establish the security area well beyond where the main battle area is desired in order to prevent the enemy from observing and interrupting defensive preparations and identifying unit positions. If they cannot push the security area forward to achieve this objective, the SBCT and its battalions may have to hold their positions initially as they transition and then withdraw units to the defensive main battle area, establishing a security force in the process.

a. **Movement into Unsecured Area of Operations.** If the battalion is moving into an unsecured AO, it may lead with the reconnaissance platoon, possibly reinforced with MGSs or infantry elements and mortars. Depending on the situation, the battalion may send a company to secure the area. The mission of the security force is to clear the area, check for contaminated areas and obstacles, and establish security for the battalion main body. After clearing the battalion's rear area and the area where the companies will be positioned, the security force should position itself to--

- Prevent enemy observation of defensive positions.
- Defeat infiltrating reconnaissance forces.
- Prevent the enemy from delivering direct fires into the battalion defenses.
- Provide early warning of the enemy's approach.

b. **Positioning of Forces.** The positioning of the battalion security elements must be integrated into the security operations of the SBCT and adjacent battalions. In contiguous or linear defenses, the SBCT commander normally organizes and defines the security area forward of the FEBA, assigning the battalions AOs of the battlefield to prevent gaps in the SBCT security. The key is to integrate operations at the SBCT level and again at the battalion level, using all available resources to execute security operations.

c. **Leaders' Reconnaissance.** When feasible, the commander and subordinate leaders conduct a reconnaissance of the AO to develop most of the plan based on their view of the actual terrain. The commander and staff develop a plan for the leaders' reconnaissance that includes provisions for security, leaders and key staff members required to participate, designation of a recorder, areas to be reconnoitered, and time allocated for the reconnaissance. When available, the commander may use aviation assets to conduct the leaders' reconnaissance.

5-38. PREPARATION AND CONTINUED SECURITY OPERATIONS

Preparation of the defense includes planning and plan refinement, positioning of forces, constructing obstacles, planning and synchronizing fires, positioning logistics, and conducting inspections and rehearsals. Throughout the preparation phase, security operations must continue without interruption. Security forces may be assigned any combination of screen, guard, and area security missions. The reconnaissance platoon may be positioned to screen and provide early warning along most likely enemy avenues of approach, reinforced in depth with sections or platoons from the companies.

a. **Security.** Security is a consideration throughout the area of operations. The battalion must array security forces in depth to provide protection and to reduce the potential for enemy infiltration. It must also secure the main battle area to prevent enemy reconnaissance, reduction of obstacles, targeting of friendly positions, and other disruptive actions. Companies must secure obstacles, battle positions, and hide positions. Elements in the battalion rear area must provide their own security, augmented by vehicles that are being repaired. With extended lines of communication, the battalion may also secure logistical elements moving forward from the BSA to support the battalion.

b. **Dispersion.** Forces should be widely dispersed and hidden to reduce vulnerability and to aid in OPSEC.

c. **Integration.** Integrate reconnaissance and ground maneuver units in the security forces. Utilize reconnaissance forces primarily to locate enemy elements and attack them with indirect fires but not to engage in direct fire attack except in self-defense. Clearly establish the C2 headquarters and communication architecture for the security force. (This can be one of the most challenging missions in terms of tactical internet management.)

5-39. SECURITY AREA ENGAGEMENT

The battalion normally does not have a significant security area engagement, as this is largely the domain of the SBCT for shaping the battlefield and setting favorable conditions for the close fight. The battalion may execute some engagement tasks in the security area to support its own or higher's defensive scheme.

a. **Execution of Planned Indirect Fires.** The battalion's planned indirect fires usually consist of security force elements or a FIST team executing one or two indirect fire targets on a primary enemy avenue of approach. This may be in support of the higher headquarters' scheme of fires, since the SBCT usually controls artillery assets throughout most of the engagement.

b. **Execution of Situational Obstacles.** The battalion may be tasked by higher or have integrated into its own defensive scheme the use of rapidly emplaced situational obstacles to execute in the security area. These obstacles serve to force enemy deployment, slowing the enemy to allow for more effective engagement with indirect fires while forcing expenditure of enemy engineer assets. These obstacles are usually planned and triggered relative to specific enemy attack options and are related to accomplishing a specific EFST. Maneuver forces may be employed forward to cover them with direct fires then withdraw to positions in the main battle area.

c. **Execution of Delay Operations through the Security Area and into the MBA.** The battalion may support its own or higher's scheme of maneuver by fighting a delay through the depth of the security area and into the main battle area. The purpose may be

to take advantage of restrictive avenues of approach, to set the conditions for a counterattack, or to avoid a decisive engagement until favorable conditions have been set.

d. **Battle Handover.** The battalion may assume control of the FEBA fight from the security force as it withdraws. Transferring responsibility from the security force to the battalion on the FEBA requires firm, clear arrangements for assuming command of the action, for coordinating direct and indirect fires, for the security force's rearward passage of lines, for closing lanes in obstacles, and for detailed movement planning that clears the security force out of the battalion AO with minimal interference with the defense.

e. **Transition.** As security area engagements transition into the main battle area, security area forces withdraw to the initial MBA or reserve positions. Some elements may maneuver to the flanks to maintain surveillance on enemy avenues of approach, providing early warning and execution of fires against following enemy forces.

5-40. MAIN BATTLE AREA ENGAGEMENT

The battalion seeks to defeat the enemy's attack forward of or within the MBA. If the battalion can bring sufficient firepower to shape the enemy in the security zone fight, a main battle area engagement may not occur. In this event, the SBCT can rapidly transition and move its battalions into a strong counterattack. However, the SBCT and the battalions normally defend over a large area, and enemy strength often forces a main battle area engagement. An MBA engagement is a combined-arms fight integrating both direct fire engagements and indirect fires, reinforced with obstacles and organic mortars. The SBCT continues to focus artillery, CAS, and attack aviation in an effort to attack the enemy continuously throughout the depth of the battlefield; therefore, fire support to the battalions may be limited to critical points and times in the MBA fight. Combining all available fires with maneuver, obstacles, and reserve elements, the battalion commander seeks to destroy the enemy in designated engagement areas or force his transition to a retrograde or hasty defense. The SBCT normally specifies control measures to coordinate and focus the defensive operation. Defensive control measures used to provide the flexibility to respond to changes in the situation and allow the commander to rapidly concentrate combat power at the decisive point include the security area, battle handover line (BHL), and the main battle area. The commander can use battle positions and additional direct fire control measures and fire support coordination measures to further synchronize the employment of his combat power.

5-41. FOLLOW-ON MISSIONS

Following a successful defense, there may be a period of confusion that the defender can exploit. Given the information dominance capabilities of the battalion and the SBCT, counterattacks can be executed quickly, based on branches and sequels to the plan, before the enemy can secure his gains or organize a defense. METT-TC and the higher commander's concept of operations dictate the battalion's follow-on mission. If the situation prevents offensive action, the battalion continues to defend. As in the initial establishment of the defense, gaining security zone space is critical. A local counterattack can provide space for a security zone and time to reorganize. Any attack option must pay particular attention not only to the terrain and enemy, but also to friendly obstacles (and their destruction times, if applicable) and areas where dual-purpose improved conventional munitions (DPICM) or bomblets have been used. If the battalion or SBCT

cannot counterattack to gain adequate security space, then the SBCT may have to direct one battalion to maintain contact with the enemy and guard the AO while others move to reestablish the defense farther to the rear. Whether continuing to defend or transitioning to offensive operations, the battalion must quickly reorganize. Key reorganization tasks include--

- Establishing and maintaining security.
- Reestablishing C2 and the C2 INFOSYS.
- Reorganizing platoons and companies.
- Treating and evacuating casualties.
- Conducting emergency resupply.
- Recovering damaged equipment and initiating repair operations.
- Processing EPWs.
- Refining and updating the COP.

5-42. REAR AREA

The battalion rear area is the area between the battalion rear boundary and the defending companies. This area is normally kept as shallow as possible to minimize terrain management and security problems for the battalion while allowing enough space for primary and alternate positions for the SBCT support area. The battalion must be prepared to defend or respond to threats in its rear area, and it may be tasked to respond to threats in the SBCT's rear (sustainment) area. The staff IPB must identify potential rear area threats and approaches, including air approaches and landing zones. Security and surveillance plans must then be developed to counter these threats. Threat levels categorize rear area threats.

a. **Level I.** A Level I threat is a small enemy force that can be defeated by CS and CSS units or the perimeter defenses of a logistics base or base cluster. Typically, a Level I threat consists of a squad-size or smaller unit or group of enemy soldiers, agents, or terrorists.

b. **Level II.** A Level II threat is an enemy activity that can be defeated by a base cluster augmented by a response force. The response force may be an MP platoon or a combat element. A Level II threat consists of an enemy special operations team, mounted or dismounted reconnaissance unit, or reduced strength small combat unit.

c. **Level III.** A Level III threat exceeds the defensive capability of a base cluster and local reserve or response force. It normally consists of a mobile enemy force and usually requires a company-size or larger force to counter. At SBCT and higher echelons, a tactical combat force (TCF) is designated to counter Level III threats. Companies or the entire battalion could be assigned a TCF mission as a primary or on-order mission for a higher headquarters. Battalions do not designate a TCF in their operations.

Section V. TECHNIQUES OF DEFENSE

The battalion normally defends using three basic techniques of defense: defend an area of operation, defend a battle position, and defend a strongpoint. The SBCT normally assigns the battalion an AO to defend.

5-43. DEFENSE OF AN AREA OF OPERATION

A defense in an AO provides the greatest degree of freedom of maneuver and fire planning within a specific area. The SBCT most often uses this method of control when it has an adequate amount of depth and width to the battlefield and does not desire decisive engagement early in the MBA fight. A battalion commander may assign his companies AOs to defend. For a defense to be cohesive, the companies and battalions cannot maneuver with complete freedom. Phase lines, engagement areas, battle positions, and obstacle belts help coordinate forces and achieve synchronized action. During defensive preparations, the commander and key staff officers use backbriefs, inspections, and rehearsals to ensure that the defensive operation is coordinated and that unacceptable or unintended gaps do not develop. Use of AOs allows flexibility and prevents the enemy from concentrating overwhelming firepower on the bulk of the defending force. Forces defending against an enemy with superior mobility and firepower must use the depth of their positions to defeat the enemy. The depth of the defense must come from the initial positioning of units throughout the AO--not from maneuvering. A properly positioned and viable reserve enhances depth (Figure 5-8).

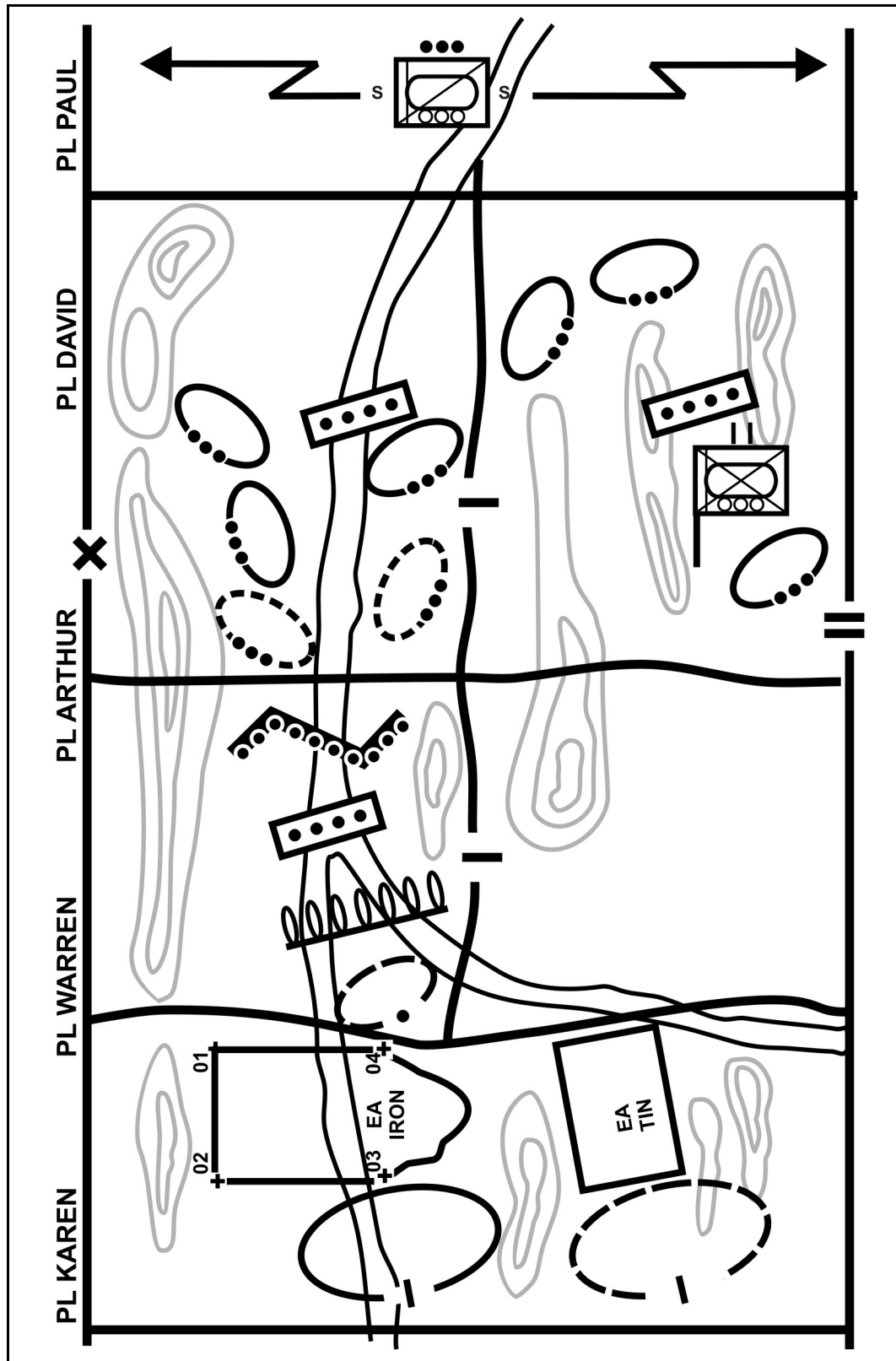


Figure 5-8. Defense of an AO.

a. **Positions.** A battalion defending against a mounted enemy uses a series of mutually supporting antiarmor positions. These should be located on armor-restricted terrain, protected by infantry, and strengthened by obstacles.

b. **Security.** The AO defense is more effective against armor but more vulnerable to infantry attack or combined arms action that can be directed against one position at a time. Position preparation must emphasize all-round security and mutual support.

c. **Deployment in Depth.** Forces deployed in depth must confront the enemy with effective fires from multiple locations as he tries to maneuver. The AO is organized around dispersed, small units that attack the enemy throughout the depth of his formations. The focus of this technique is the enemy force. Mines and other obstacles and patrols can close gaps that fire cannot cover effectively due to terrain masking or heavily wooded areas. The commander can position infantry along mounted avenues of approach within restricted terrain, thereby maximizing its capabilities.

d. **Engagement Options.** The commander has two engagement options when defending an AO. He chooses the appropriate one based mainly on the restrictions of the terrain and his expectation of achieving surprise. His first option is to begin engaging at maximum optimum range, based on the terrain and available weapons systems. His second option is to allow the enemy to close to within direct fire range of the infantry squads and machine guns. The defender then engages the enemy with violent hasty and deliberate counterattacks designed to destroy the enemy from any direction. In restricted terrain, this option denies a more mobile enemy force any firepower or mobility advantage.

(1) ***Beginning the Engagement at Long Range.*** The defender initiates fires at long ranges with FA, tactical aircraft, and attack helicopters to begin to break up the continuity of the attack. As the enemy closes to within range of organic MGS and antiarmor weapons, these weapons further disrupt enemy synchronization and destroy key vehicles. When the enemy enters the engagement range of the battalion's organic weapons, antiarmor weapons engage him from multiple unexpected directions and destroy him.

(2) ***Allowing the Enemy into the Depth of the Position.*** This technique is offensively oriented. It allows for planned penetrations, ambushes, and counterattacks throughout the enemy formation. A forward array of forces cannot defend armor approaches. Such an array can be overrun or penetrated rapidly while under massive artillery, smoke, and direct fire suppression. To avoid penetration, the battalion must array forces in depth. Concentrating the battalion on narrow fronts is risky.

e. **Planning.** The commander considers the following factors when facing a mostly mechanized or armored enemy.

(1) ***Mounted Avenues of Approach.*** The commander or S3 determines enemy mounted avenues of approach and the size force that can move on each. In addition, the commander or S3 estimate the maximum number of vehicles the enemy can deploy at one time on given avenues of approach and the length of time this target array would be exposed.

(2) ***Engagement Areas.*** Engagement areas determine where the battalion can kill vehicles and where it can position antiarmor weapons to kill them. The commander and staff identify potential positions throughout the AO. If all positions are used, the commander disperses antiarmor systems. By doing this, he reduces his vulnerability to total suppression but increases the vulnerability of his forces by having many small units

that can be defeated in detail or bypassed. Dispersion also increases his command, control, and logistical concerns. The commander can go to the other extreme and place his forces in a few positions, which lessens command and control problems and enhances the security of his forces. However, this extreme makes his antiarmor weapons more vulnerable to suppression and mounted bypass. The prudent commander balances these choices to allow maximum freedom of decentralized action for subordinates.

(3) ***Dispersion.*** Disperse antiarmor weapons so infantrymen can protect these weapons. The infantry prevents dismounted infiltration, provides security for antiarmor weapons (mainly during reduced visibility), and destroys armor at short ranges.

(4) ***Massing of Antiarmor Fires.*** Mass antiarmor fires by focusing, distributing, and shifting antiarmor fire through the use of terrain and or threat-based fire control measures. Attached antiarmor assets can be attached to or in DS of a company.

(5) ***Obstacle Planning and Integration.*** Plan obstacles to disrupt, fix, turn, or block the enemy and protect positions. Encountering these obstacles increases enemy exposure time and enhances the effect of direct and indirect fires.

(6) ***Integrated Fire Support.*** Planned CAS sorties can provide rapid and concentrated aerial-delivered firepower in the first, crucial engagements of the battle. Mortars and artillery increase the effects of antiarmor weapons by suppressing enemy overwatch elements, forcing enemy armor to button up. Attack helicopters rapidly mass antiarmor and antipersonnel weapons and provide security on flanks and other unoccupied areas.

5-44. DEFENSE FROM A BATTLE POSITION

A battle position is a general location and orientation of forces on the ground from which units defend. Battalion- to platoon-size units can use BPs (Figure 5-9, page 5-50).

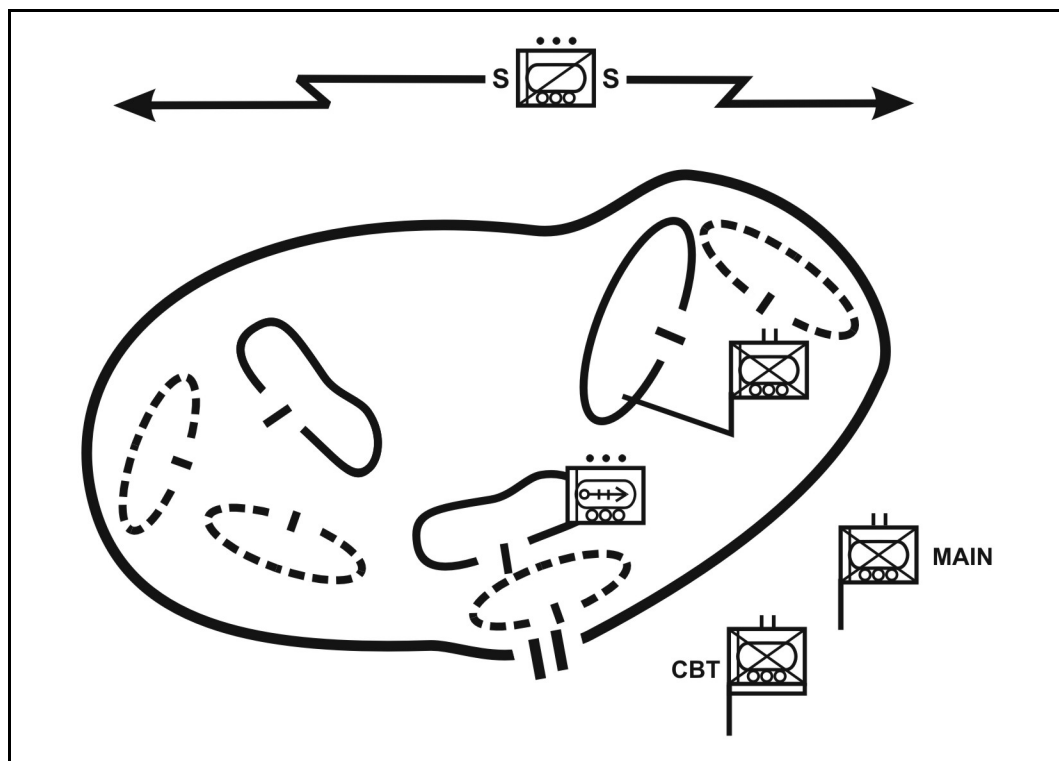


Figure 5-9. Disposition of forces in and about a BP.

a. **Use of Battle Positions.** Use of battle positions reduces the instructions needed to move a force. BPs are often used as graphic control measures for a FRAGO and are identified by number, letter, name, or a combination of these.

b. **Three Levels of Preparation for a Battle Position.** The three levels of preparation for a BP are occupy, prepare, and reconnoiter. The use of on-order BPs with the associated tasks "prepare" or "reconnoiter" adds flexibility and depth to the defensive plan.

(1) **Occupy.** This is complete preparation of the position from which the company will initially defend. The position is fully reconnoitered, prepared, and occupied before the "defend no later than (NLT)" time specified in the battalion OPOD. The company must rehearse the occupation, and the commander must establish a trigger for occupation of the position.

(2) **Prepare.** The unit fully reconnoiters the position and the corresponding engagement area, marking vehicle positions in the BP and fire control measures in the engagement area. From the BP, the unit must accomplish all actions to enable it to execute the mission immediately on occupation. Planning, coordination, and rehearsals are required for the unit to displace to the BP and accomplish the mission from it. Within time constraints, the unit digs in survivability positions, constructs fighting positions, designates target reference points (TRPs), develops direct and indirect fire plans, emplaces obstacles, clears fields of fire, and prestocks ammunition. Prepare missions are normally critical to the defense. A unit assigned such a mission must maintain security on the position and on the routes to it.

(3) **Reconnoiter.** The unit fully reconnoiters the engagement area and BP, planning tentative unit positions in the BP and establishing limited fire control measures in the

engagement area. The unit must coordinate and plan for defense from this position. Leaders reconnoiter, select, and mark positions, routes, and locations for security elements. They coordinate movement and other actions, such as preparing obstacles and occupation plans, with other elements of the battalion.

c. **Maneuver.** The commander can move his elements freely within the assigned BP. To comply with the commander's intent, units can maneuver outside the BP to adjust fires or to seize opportunities for offensive action. Battalion security, CS, and CSS assets are often positioned outside the BP with approval from the headquarters assigning the BP.

d. **Space Allocation.** The commander allocates space to subordinate elements within the BP area based on the space available and the relative danger of nuclear and chemical attack. The battalion commander thinks two levels down or in terms of platoon BPs when he selects a BP for subordinate companies. He must allow enough space on each BP for dispersed primary, successive, and alternate positions for key weapons. The battalion commander can vary the number of maneuver elements in the battalion BP by allocating larger company BPs. Battle positions can also reflect positions in depth. They may take a shape other than the standard oblong shape, which suggests a linear defense within the BP. Large positions also increase dispersion in a nuclear and chemical environment. The commander can combine company AO and BPs in the battalion AO to suit the tactical situation.

e. **Types of Battle Positions.** There are five types of battle positions: primary, alternate, supplementary, subsequent, and strongpoint.

(1) **Primary Positions.** Primary positions cover the enemy's most likely avenue of approach into the area. A primary position is the best position from which to accomplish the assigned mission.

(2) **Alternate Positions.** Alternate positions are those assigned for use when the primary position becomes untenable or unsuitable for carrying out the assigned task. These positions allow the defender to carry out his original task, such as covering an avenue of approach or engagement area. Alternate positions increase the defender's survivability by allowing engagement of the enemy from multiple positions and movement to other positions in case of suppressive or obscuring fires.

(3) **Supplementary Positions.** Supplementary positions are designated to cover avenues of approach that are not expected to be the enemy's primary avenue.

(4) **Subsequent Positions.** Subsequent positions are those to which the unit expects to move during the course of the battle. The defending unit may have a series of subsequent positions (particularly in delay operations), each with associated primary, alternate, and supplementary positions.

(5) **Strongpoints.** Strongpoints are heavily fortified battle positions tied into a natural or reinforcing obstacle to create an anchor for defenses or to deny the enemy key or decisive terrain. Strongpoints require extensive time, engineering support, and Class IV resources to construct. The battalion may be given strongpoint missions in rare instances, but the static nature of the operation and the resources required to conduct the strongpoint make it an unusual mission assignment.

5-45. REVERSE SLOPE DEFENSE

A reverse slope defense is organized to use a topographical crest to mask the defender from the attacker's observation and from supporting direct fire (Figure 5-10).

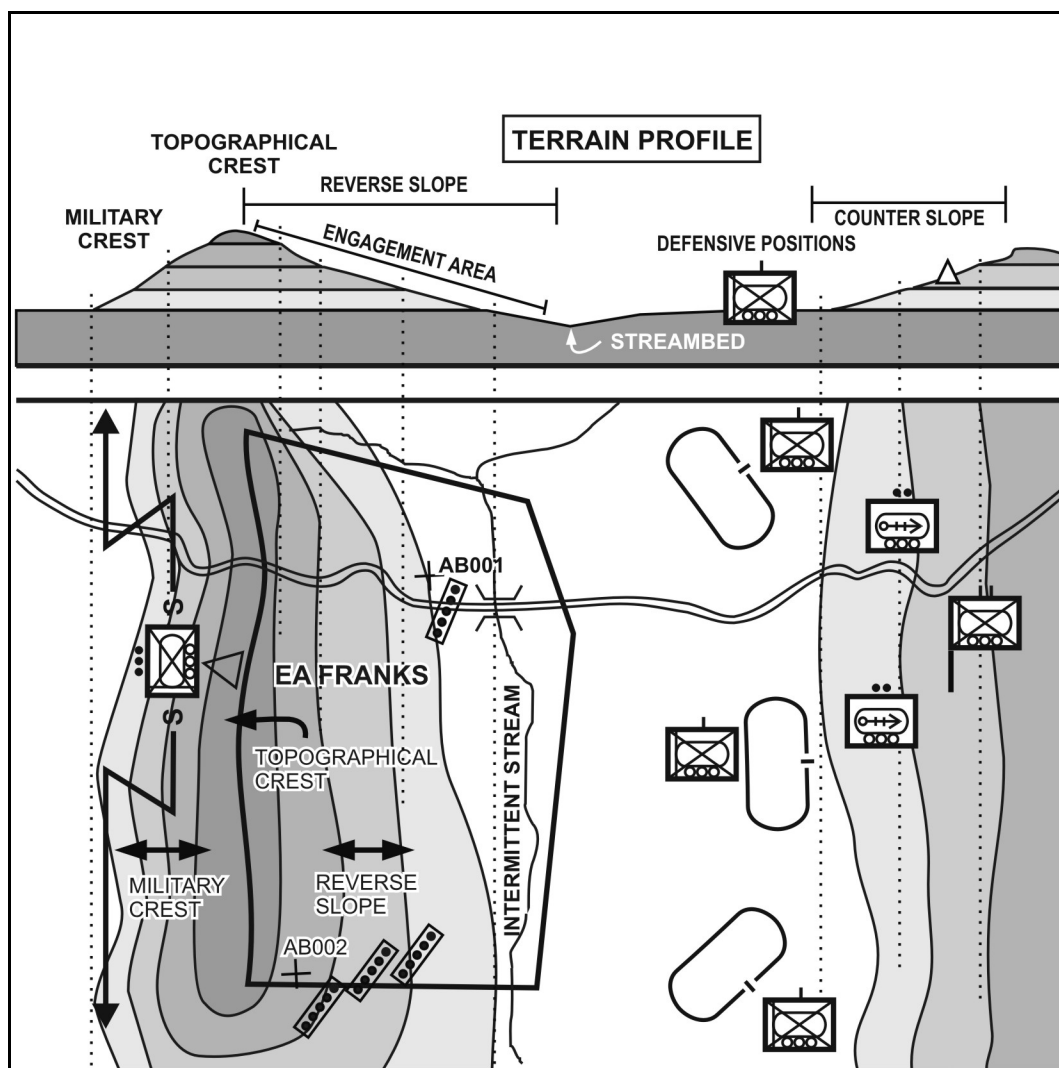


Figure 5-10. Organization of the reverse slope defense.

a. **Conditions.** The battalion commander may adopt a reverse slope position for elements of the battalion when--

- Enemy fire makes the forward slope untenable.
- Lack of cover and concealment on the forward slope makes it untenable.
- The forward slope has been lost or has not yet been gained.
- The forward slope is exposed to enemy direct fire weapons fired from beyond the effective range of the defender's weapons. Moving to the reverse slope removes the attacker's standoff advantage.
- The terrain on the reverse slope affords better fields of fire than the forward slope.
- The defender must avoid creating a dangerous salient.

- The commander is forced to assume a hasty defense while in contact with or in proximity to the enemy.
- Surprising and deceiving the enemy as to the true location of the battalion defensive positions is essential.

b. **Advantages.** The following are some advantages of a reverse slope defense:

- Enemy ground observation of the battle area is masked, even from surveillance devices and radar.
- Enemy direct fire weapons cannot effectively fire on the position without coming within range of the defender's weapons.
- The enemy must try to breach obstacles on the reverse slope within direct fire range of all the defender's weapons. (The attacker cannot locate these obstacles until he encounters them, thus reducing his reaction time and maneuver space.)
- The enemy is deceived as to the strength and location of defensive positions.
- Enemy indirect fire is less effective since he cannot see the defender.
- The defender gains tactical surprise.
- The lack of enemy ground observation allows more freedom of movement within the battle area.
- MGSs, ICVs, Javelins, and TOW missile systems, if positioned properly, can mass fires on the reverse military crest; infantry small-arms weapons can contribute their close fires to the battle.
- The unit can dig in more quickly even when the enemy is approaching because the slope of the hill covers and conceals the unit from the direct fire and observation of approaching enemy ground forces. Defenders can concentrate on position preparation.
- The terrain protects the unit from the blast and thermal effects of enemy or friendly force nuclear weapons.

c. **Disadvantages.** The following are some disadvantages of a reverse slope:

- Observation of the enemy may be limited, and the defender may be unable to cover obstacles to the front by direct fire.
- The topographical crest may limit the range of important direct-fire weapons. These weapons may have to locate separately from the dismounted infantry elements to exploit their range.
- The enemy holds the high ground in an attack. His attack is downhill; the counterattack is uphill. This may provide a psychological advantage to the enemy.
- Because the reverse military crest must be controlled, the effectiveness of the reverse slope defense is reduced during limited visibility.

d. **Organization of the Defensive Position.** The battalion commander organizes the defensive position IAW procedures that apply to all defensive techniques.

(1) **Forward Edge of the Position.** The forward edge of the position should be within small-arms range of the crest. It should be far enough from the crest that fields of fire allow the defender time to place well-aimed fire on the enemy before he reaches friendly positions.

(2) **Flanking Fires.** A reverse slope position is most effective when units on adjacent terrain can place flanking fires on the forward slope.

(3) **Security Force.** The units should establish a security force to the front to stop or delay the enemy, to disorganize his attack, and to deceive him as to the location of the defensive position. When this security element withdraws, the unit must maintain observation, indirect fire, and security to the front.

(4) **Observation Posts.** The unit establishes observation posts on or forward of the topographical crest. This allows long-range observation over the entire front and indirect fire coverage of forward obstacles. OPs are usually provided by the reserve and may vary in size from a few soldiers to a reinforced squad. They should include FOs. At night, their number should be increased to improve security.

5-46. DEFENSE OF A STRONGPOINT

The mission to create and defend a strongpoint implies retention of terrain to stop or redirect enemy formations. Battalion strongpoints can be established in isolation when tied to restricted terrain on their flanks or on mounted avenues of approach tied to unit defensive positions on the strongpoint flanks. Strongpoints may be on the FEBA or in depth in the MBA (Figure 5-11). A bypassed strongpoint exposes enemy flanks to attacks from friendly forces inside and outside the strongpoint.

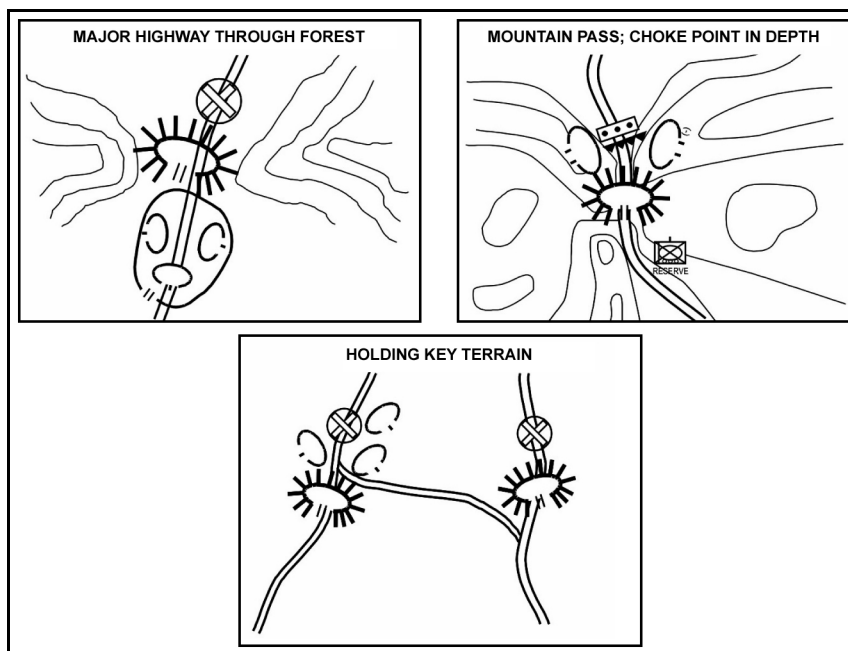


Figure 5-11. Examples of strongpoints.

a. **Planning a Strongpoint Defense.** The battalion pays a high cost in manpower, equipment, material, and time to construct a strongpoint. It takes several days of dedicated work to construct a strongpoint defense. The strongpoint defense sacrifices the inherent mobility advantage of the SBCT infantry battalion.

(1) **Enemy Assault.** When the enemy cannot easily bypass a strongpoint, the unit should expect and be ready to repel repeated enemy dismounted assaults. The strongpoint will probably receive intensive artillery attacks and must be prepared with overhead

cover. Multiple positions in the strongpoint provide defense in depth. Combat vehicles committed to the strongpoint defense use multiple firing positions while infantry squads use positions tied together with trenches. A battalion assigned a strongpoint mission--

- Plans movement to alternative positions in the strongpoint.
- Coordinates with forces outside the strongpoint, especially counterattack forces.
- Plans direct fires in detail and receives fire support priority.
- Establishes a small reserve to counter penetrations and, when appropriate, attacks outside the strongpoint.

(2) **Mutual Support.** All positions in a strongpoint are mutually supporting (Figure 5-12). Positioning must allow massing of the fires of two or more units in the primary EA and prevent the enemy from isolating positions and defeating them in detail. Sectors of fire help coordinate and mass fires between positions. Avenues of approach into and around the strongpoint that cannot be covered by forces in primary positions must be kept under surveillance and covered by supplementary positions prepared in as much detail as time permits and occupied on order.

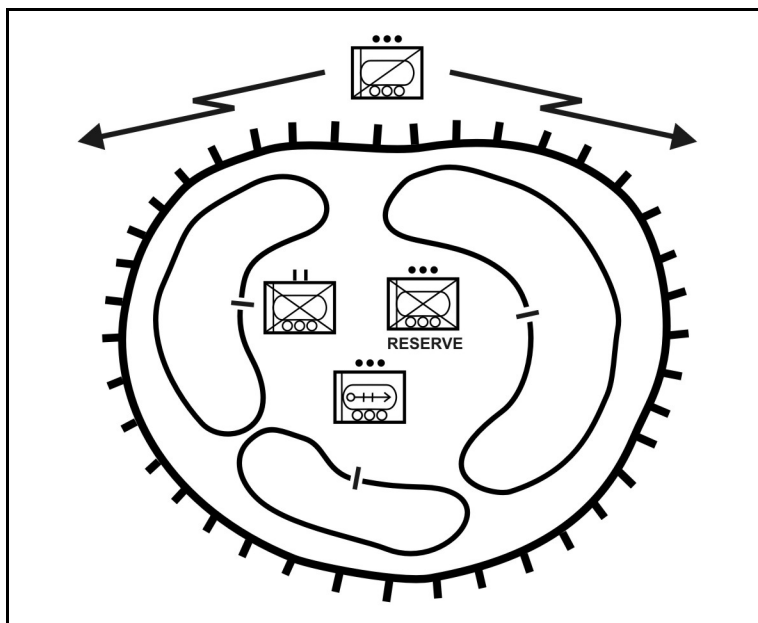


Figure 5-12. Battalion strongpoint, all forces within the strongpoint.

(3) **Forces Operating outside the Strongpoint.** In some situations, the battalion defends from a strongpoint with forces operating outside the strongpoint. Security forces may operate forward or perform economy of force missions. On their return to the strongpoint, security forces either screen a secondary avenue of approach or occupy a position in depth.

(4) **Dismounted Infantry Squads.** The commander may separate the MGSs and infantry squads, placing the infantry squads on restricted terrain with the MGSs deployed in positions in depth. If available, antiarmor forces occupy positions in depth to take advantage of their long-range fires. Alternate and supplementary positions are planned throughout the strongpoint and AO. Mortars operate in split sections on the reverse slope

or in a built-up area in the center of the strongpoint. Combat trains, with emergency resupply of Classes II and V, are placed in prepared defilade positions or buildings in the strongpoint. Supplies are pre-positioned near primary, alternate, and successive positions. The SBCT provides units to keep the main supply route open.

(5) **Security Force.** The commander may use a company as part of the security force to provide information through contact and spot reports. The company assigned the security mission screens the battalion AO or along the most dangerous avenue of approach. This company provides early warning to the battalion, destroys enemy reconnaissance elements, and helps shape the battlefield so the enemy is directed against the strongpoint.

b. **Intelligence Support for a Strongpoint.** The strongpoint represents the culmination of the SBCT S2's IPB and the commander's estimate of the situation. Based on a METT-TC analysis, the SBCT commander identifies the piece of ground that, if seized by the enemy, might cost the SBCT the battle. This piece of ground is the strongpoint.

(1) **Terrain Analysis.** The battalion S2 analyzes the terrain in a very detailed manner. Unlike other types of defense, the strongpoint must be defensible in 360 degrees. As a result, the terrain analysis must be conducted with the understanding that enemy offensive operations, from an infiltration to a major attack, could appear from any direction (multiple avenues of approach).

(2) **Reconnaissance and Surveillance Plan.** The reconnaissance and surveillance plan is essential to the strongpoint's effectiveness. Some reconnaissance assets may be able to operate outside the position to provide initial early warning. If the strongpoint becomes encircled, the unit must be able to anticipate the actions of the enemy and respond internally. OPs positioned outside the position must be sustainable should the strongpoint become surrounded. The unit should have a plan for bringing patrols or other reconnaissance and surveillance assets into the position despite enemy presence.

c. **Maneuver Concept.** The strongpoint defense is the most labor-intensive operation a battalion commander may execute. Despite its static nature, the construction must allow for maximum flexibility. The key to an effective and sustainable strongpoint defense is to have a solid obstacle and direct and indirect fire plan coupled with properly constructed fortifications. The commander must take a personal interest in the interface between combat, CS, and CSS elements.

(1) **Positions.** The selection of company combat, CS, and CSS positions is the first priority of the battalion commander. He must plan so his weapons systems can engage the enemy effectively along the major expected enemy avenue of approach. The S2's line-of-sight analysis, the IPB, and the obstacle plan determine these positions. The actual construction of the battalion EA and the direct fire control measures are identical to that discussed in earlier sections. The considerations for weapons systems employment, however, may be different, particularly with respect to the lack of depth in the strongpoint itself. In a strongpoint, it is much more difficult to achieve depth of fires than in AO defensive operations. Generally, infantry squads secure the outskirts alongside or slightly to the left or right front of the perimeter.

(2) **Defensive Position Selection.** Once the commander has determined the locations suitable for each type weapon system, he selects the company defensive positions. He must address several considerations before finalizing the defensive positions. First, how

much firepower is needed to cover the enemy avenue of approach? Second, how can the defensive positions be selected so they can be responsive to enemy attacks from other directions? Third, what task organization is best suited to the terrain and meets the security needs of the battalion?

(3) **Reserve.** In a strongpoint defense, it is important to maintain a reserve that can react to enemy activity against the position. The reserve may be mounted, dismounted, or both. The reserve may--

- Block an enemy penetration of the perimeter.
- Reinforce a position or section of the defense.
- Counterattack to restore a portion of the strongpoint.

d. **Strongpoint Fire Support.** Dominating terrain features, mounted and dismounted avenues of approach, and likely enemy avenues of approach hidden from direct observation should be targeted. In this way, the fire support plan will help keep the enemy at a distance from the strongpoint.

(1) If the enemy is able to reach the strongpoint in significant strength, the close-in fire support plan is essential to the integrity and survivability of the position. Fires must be planned on obstacles close to the position, even if they are danger close. Evacuation of the position may become necessary during the battle. If fires are planned on the position, the unit can destroy the enemy and reoccupy the positions for continued defense.

(2) If 360-degree indirect mortar support is required, the mortar tubes may be dismounted from the vehicles so they can respond easily to calls for fire in any direction. If the mortar tubes remain in the MCs, firing in some directions will be difficult without moving the vehicle. The vehicles should remain in proximity to the tubes, dug in, and serving as an ammunition storage facility. Figure 5-13, page 5-58, illustrates the overall battalion fire support plan.

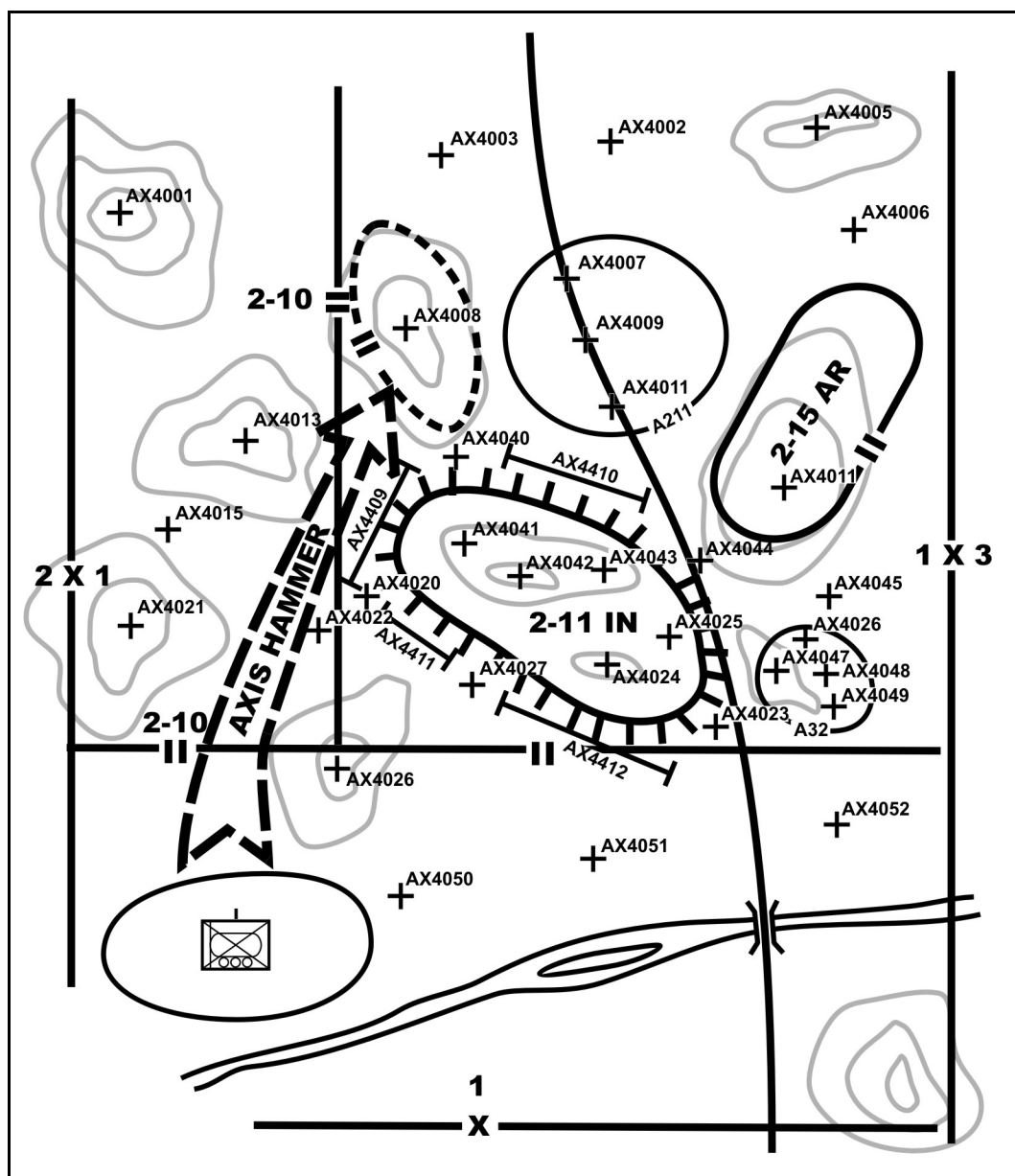


Figure 5-13. Strongpoint fire support plan.

e. **Strongpoint Engineer Support.** The supporting engineer element commander or platoon leader accompanies the maneuver commander on the reconnaissance of the strongpoint area. He plans indirect fires and scatterable mines to slow, disrupt, and canalize the advancing enemy and prepares the position to make it physically impassable to armored or mechanized forces and to enhance the killing power of antiarmor weapons with obstacles. The commander determines emplacement priority for fighting positions and obstacles and allocates the assets needed to accomplish the mission. Strongpoints are constructed from inside to outside. Regardless of the configuration of the strongpoint, the following are essential tasks to perform:

- Prepare obstacles to prevent their being overrun.
- Prepare hull down positions for ICVs.

- Emplace obstacles at optimum weapon range.
- Construct protected routes between positions.
- Plan and coordinate for scatterable mines.

f. **Air Defense Artillery Support for a Strongpoint.** The air defense commander identifies positions to facilitate engagements of enemy fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft. The air defense commander ensures the engineers site actual positions properly. Engineers know how to construct positions, but the "occupant" must ensure the position is properly oriented.

g. **Strongpoint Combat Service Support.** The battalion S4 helps plan for the following aspects of CSS in a strongpoint.

(1) **Cache.** The S4 examines the engineer's strongpoint construction plan and determines the best places to cache ammunition and supplies. The units refine the cache plan by positioning smaller caches adjacent to individual crew-served weapons. Once the unit caches have been identified or sited, the battalion S4 develops a resupply plan. Battalion caches must be dispersed throughout the strongpoint to prevent a single detonation.

(2) **Medical Support.** Medical personnel must be ready to evacuate wounded from the perimeter to the aid station. The aid station is dug in, with easy access to each unit. The aid station should have access to a water supply, generators, and a bunker, if possible. In an elongated strongpoint, the aid station may split to provide support from two locations.

(3) **Refuel Points.** Even though vehicles in the position are static, they still burn fuel during idling. The battalion must develop a refueling plan.

(4) **Combat Trains CP.** The CTCP is dug in separately from the battalion CP. It serves as the alternate CP should the main CP be destroyed. It is positioned away from the main CP but in proximity to the aid station and supply activities. The CTCP must establish redundant communications with the main CP so that direct communication is possible between the two headquarters.

h. **Strongpoint Command and Control.** The commander develops his strongpoint defense plan by using the terrain to its utmost advantage. The commander must be able to traverse the strongpoint and respond to an attack from any direction. His observation posts must afford the opportunity to observe the battle. Communication wire must be buried deep in the strongpoint and field phones made available throughout the position.

5-47. PERIMETER DEFENSE

A perimeter defense is a defense oriented in all directions (Figure 5-14, page 5-60). The battalion uses it for self-protection. The battalion establishes a perimeter defense when it must hold critical terrain in areas where the defense is not tied in with adjacent units. The battalion may also form a perimeter when it has been bypassed and isolated by the enemy and must defend in place. These differences are in contrast to the strongpoint defense, in which the position is tied in with the rest of the defense and considerable time and resources are spent to hold the ground.

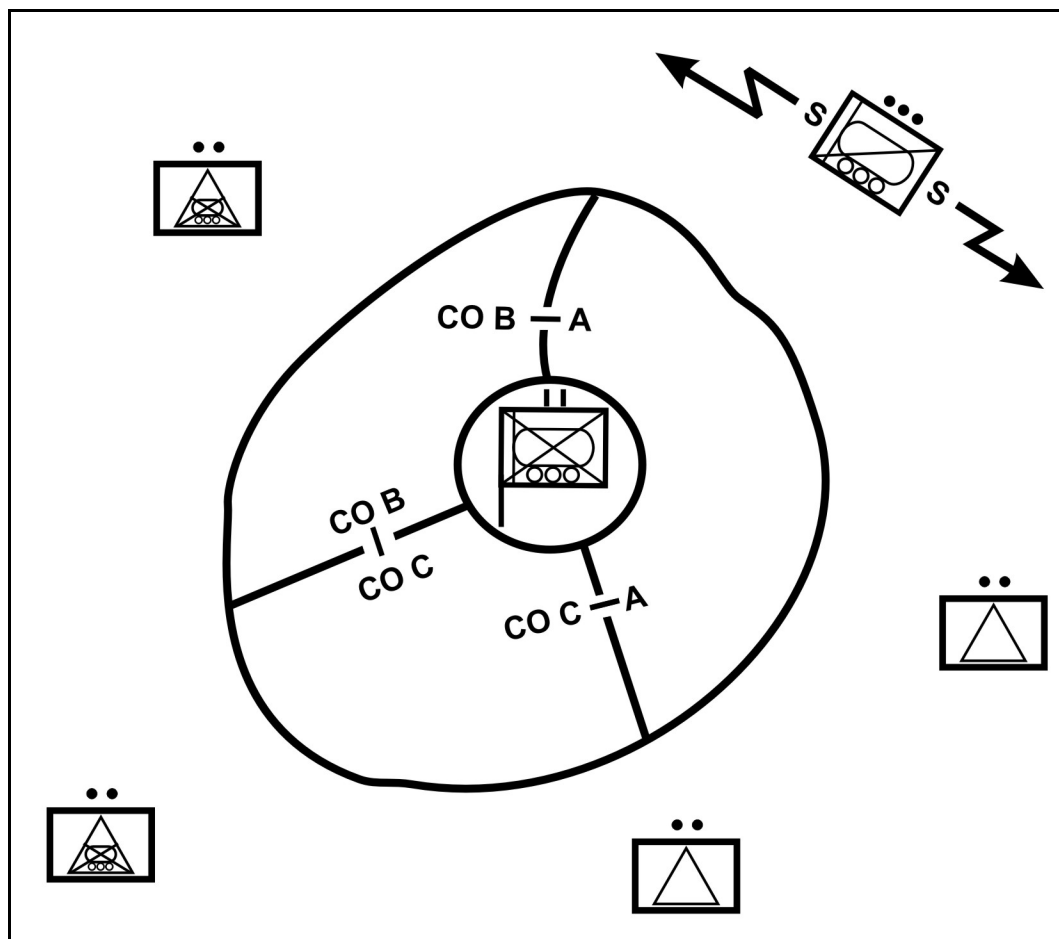


Figure 5-14. Perimeter defense.

a. **Planning Considerations.** While in a perimeter defense, the battalion should consider--

- Positioning MGS and antiarmor weapons systems on restricted terrain to overwatch mounted avenues of approach.
- Providing as much depth as the diameter of the perimeter allows through the location of security elements, the reserve, and secondary sectors of fire of antitank weapons.
- Constructing obstacles to fix or block the enemy so he can be engaged effectively.
- Maintaining an antiarmor heavy reserve.

b. **Retention of Key Terrain.** The battalion retains terrain key to future operations such as linkup, extraction, or breakout. The battalion commander employs a security force outside the perimeter for early warning. He augments the security force with mounted or dismounted patrols and OPs controlled by subordinate companies on the perimeter. Periodic patrols cover areas that stationary elements cannot observe.

c. **Battalion Reserve.** The battalion reserve defends a portion of the second line of defense behind the perimeter elements. The reserve must have the mobility to react to enemy action in any portion of the perimeter. It is positioned to block the most dangerous avenue of approach and is assigned on-order positions on other critical avenues. If the

enemy penetrates the perimeter, the reserve blocks the enemy penetration or counterattacks to restore the perimeter. After committing the reserve, the commander immediately designates a new reserve force to meet other threats.

d. **Command and Control.** If the battalion forms the perimeter because of isolation, then combat, CS, and CSS elements from other units come under the tactical command of the senior combat commander in the perimeter. The commander assigns them missions based on support capabilities.

e. **Combat Service Support.** CSS elements may support from inside the perimeter or from another location depending on the mission and status of the battalion, the type of transport available, the weather, and the terrain. All service support assets inside the perimeter should be in a protected location from which they can provide continuous support. Since resupply may have to be done by air, the position should include or be near a landing or drop zone. The availability of LZs and DZs protected from the enemy's observation and fire is a main consideration in selecting and organizing the position. Since aerial resupply is vulnerable to weather and enemy fires, commanders must emphasize supply economy and protection of available stocks.

5-48. RESERVE

The reserve is a force withheld from action to be committed at a decisive moment. It provides the commander with the flexibility to exploit success or deal with a tactical setback and the flexibility to respond in situations where there is a great deal of uncertainty about the enemy. Normally, the battalion commander can only allocate a platoon as a reserve. This decreases the ability of the battalion to respond to tactical emergencies or to exploit success. It increases the significance of the SBCT's reserve element, which may be only a company or a two-company battalion operating over an extended area. On the modern battlefield, situational obstacles, fires, CAS, and attack aviation will increasingly be used to augment reserve forces, usually at the SBCT level.

a. The choice of a force designated to be a reserve depends upon the factors of METT-TC. Generally, an MGS platoon, reinforced with an infantry rifle squad, is ideal because of its mobility, firepower, and limited obstacle breaching capability. In close terrain, an infantry force may be best suited. In compartmented or restricted terrain against a mechanized enemy, mobile Javelin teams can be an effective reserve force.

b. The reserve's likely tasks are issued as planning priorities and may include one or more of the following:

- Counterattack locally.
- Defeat enemy air assaults
- Block enemy penetrations.
- Reinforce a committed company.
- Protect rear area operations.
- Secure high-value assets.

c. During defensive preparations, the battalion commander may employ his reserve in other tasks, such as security operations or rear area security. The commander must balance these uses with the needs to protect his reserve and with the commander's requirement to conduct troop-leading procedures, coordination, and reconnaissance.

d. The commander and staff must determine where and under what conditions the reserve force is likely to be employed in order to position it effectively and give it

appropriate planning priorities. The reserve force commander must analyze his assigned planning priorities, conduct the coordination with units that will be affected by his maneuver and commitment, and provide information to the commander and staff on routes and employment times to designated critical points on the battlefield.

5-49. COUNTERATTACK

The battalion may conduct local counterattacks to restore or preserve defensive integrity. Unless defensive operations have left the battalion largely unscathed, the battalion usually lacks the ability to conduct a significant counterattack by itself. Within the context of the SBCT's operations, a defending battalion may execute a counterattack to support the SBCT's defensive posture, as part of a larger force seeking to complete the destruction of the enemy's attack, or as part of a transition to offensive operations.

Section VI. COUNTERMOBILITY, MOBILITY, AND SURVIVABILITY INTEGRATION

Much of the strength of a defense rests on the integration and construction of reinforcing obstacles, exploitation of existing obstacles, and actions to enhance the survivability of the force through construction of fighting positions and fortifications. The commander's intent focuses mobility and survivability (M/S) planning through his articulation of obstacle intent (target, relative location, obstacle effect) and priorities and establishment of priorities for survivability and mobility. Guided by that intent, the battalion engineer (usually the DS engineer company commander) develops a scheme of engineer operations that includes engineer task organization, priorities of effort and support, subordinate engineer unit missions, and M/S instructions for all units. Chapter 10 contains information on engineer systems and capabilities.

5-50. COUNTERMOBILITY

The commander and staff develop the obstacle plan concurrently with the fire support plan and defensive scheme, guided by the commander's intent. (Figure 5-15, illustrates an example of a battalion obstacle plan.) They must integrate into the intelligence collection plan the use of intelligent minefields such as Raptor, if allocated. The commander's intent for countermobility should contain three elements.

a. **Target.** The target is the enemy force that the commander wants to affect with fires and tactical obstacles. The commander identifies the target in terms of the size and type of enemy force, the echelon, the avenue of approach, or a combination of these methods.

b. **Effect.** This is the intended effect that the commander wants the obstacles and fires to have on the targeted enemy force. Tactical obstacles produce one of the following effects: block, turn, fix, or disrupt (Table 5-2, page 5-64). The obstacle effect drives integration, focuses subordinates' fires, and focuses the obstacle effort.

c. **Relative Location.** The relative location is where the commander wants the obstacle effect to occur against the targeted enemy force. Whenever possible, the commander identifies the location relative to the terrain and maneuver or fire control measures to integrate the effects of obstacles with fires.

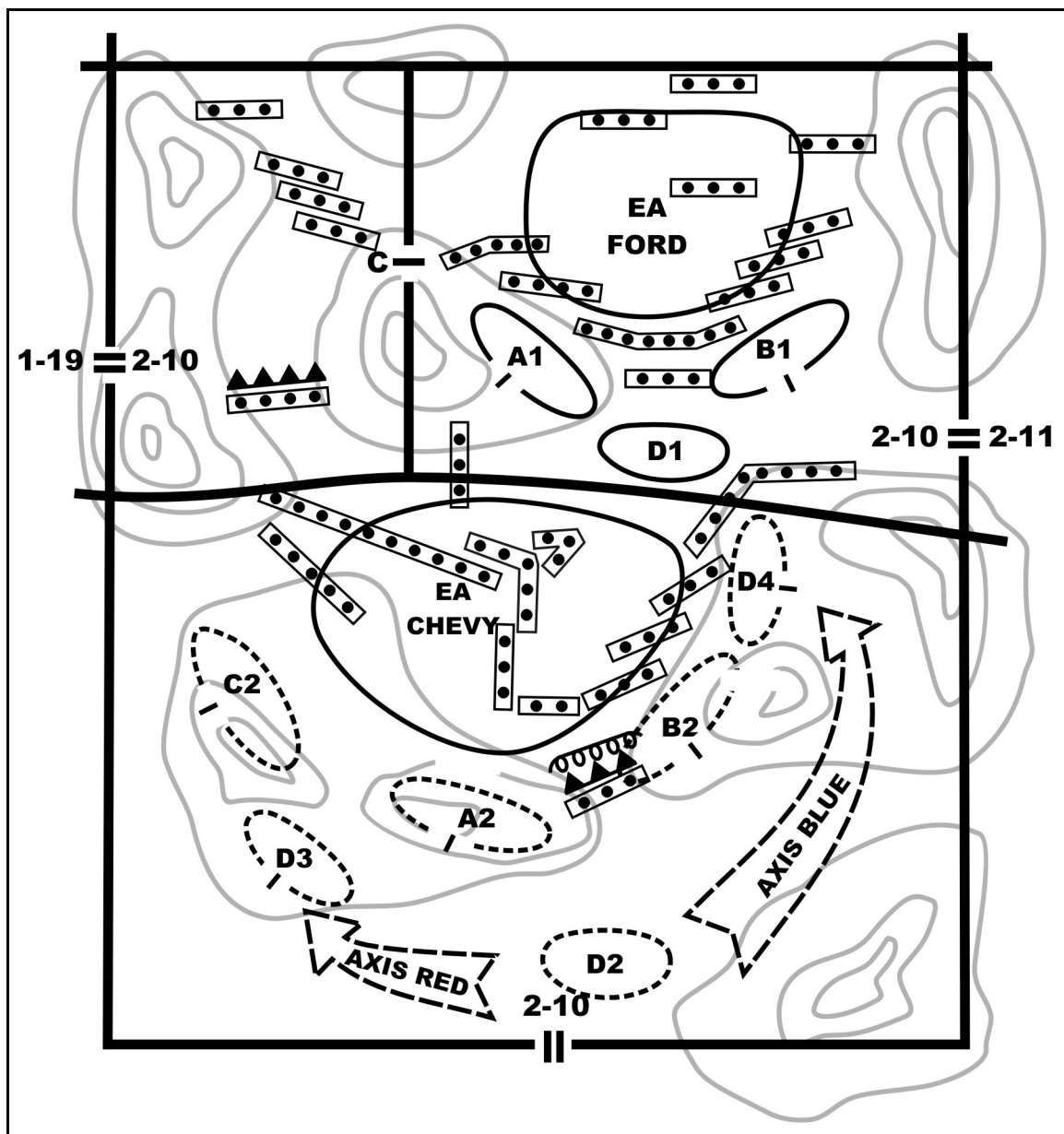


Figure 5-15. Example of a battalion obstacle plan.





OBSTACLE EFFECT	PURPOSE	FIRES AND OBSTACLES MUST:	OBSTACLE CHARACTERISTICS
 DISRUPT ①	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakup enemy formations. • Interrupt the enemy's timetable and C2. • Cause premature commitment of breach assets. • Cause the enemy to piecemeal his attack. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause the enemy to deploy early. • Slow part of his formation while allowing part to advance unimpeded. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not require extensive resources. • Difficult to detect at long range.
 FIX ②	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slow an attacker within an area so he can be destroyed. • Generate the time necessary for the friendly force to disengage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause the enemy to deploy into attack formation before encountering the obstacles. • Allow the enemy to advance slowly in an EA or AO. • Make the enemy fight in multiple directions once he is in the EA or AO. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrayed in depth. • Span the entire width of the avenue of approach. • Must not make the terrain appear impenetrable.
 TURN ③	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Force the enemy to move in the direction desired by the friendly commander. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the enemy from bypassing or breaching the obstacle belt. • Maintain pressure on the enemy force throughout the turn. • Mass direct and indirect fires at the anchor point of the turn. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tie into impassable terrain at the anchor point. • Consist of obstacles in depth. • Provide a subtle orientation relative to the enemy's approach.
 BLOCK ④	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop an attacker along a specific avenue of approach. • Prevent an attacker from passing through an AO or EA. • Stop the enemy from using an avenue of approach and force him to use another avenue of approach. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevent the enemy from bypassing or penetrating through the belt. • Stop the enemy's advance. • Destroy all enemy breach efforts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must tie into impassable terrain. • Consist of complex obstacles. • Defeat the enemy's mounted and dismounted breaching effort.

Table 5-2. Obstacle effects.

d. **Tactical Obstacles.** Obstacles are force-oriented combat multipliers. The battalion employs tactical obstacles to attack the enemy's ability to move, mass, and reinforce directly. Tactical obstacles are integrated into the scheme of maneuver and fires to produce specific obstacle effects. Obstacles alone do not produce significant effects

against the enemy; obstacles must be integrated with fires to be effective. The engineer section in Chapter 10 provides tables and specific information on engineer capabilities and obstacle effects. The following are the three types of tactical obstacles:

(1) **Directed.** The SBCT directs obstacles as specified tasks to the battalion through the use of obstacle belts. The battalion may use the same technique, but more likely will be specific about the location and type of obstacle. The commander may use directed obstacles or obstacle groups to achieve specific obstacle effects at key locations on the battlefield. In this case, the staff plans the obstacle control measures and resources as well as determines measures and tasks to subordinates to integrate the directed obstacles with fires.

(2) **Situational.** Situational obstacles are obstacles that the SBCT or battalion plans and possibly prepares before an operation; however, they do not execute the obstacles unless specific criteria are met. Situational obstacles are “be-prepared” obstacles and provide the commander with flexibility for employing tactical obstacles based on battlefield developments. The commander may use engineer forces to emplace tactical obstacles rapidly, but more often he relies on scatterable mine systems. The SBCT staff normally plans situational obstacles to allow the commander to shift his countermobility effort rapidly to where he needs it the most based on the situation. Execution triggers for situational obstacles are integrated into the decision support template (see Chapter 10, Section III, and FM 90-7, for situational obstacles). Situational obstacles must be well integrated with tactical plans to avoid fratricide. Given the changes in engineer force structure, tactical concepts, and capabilities, situational obstacles are increasingly used in lieu of conventionally emplaced obstacles.

(3) **Reserve.** Reserve obstacles are obstacles for which the commander restricts execution authority. These are “on-order” obstacles. The commander specifies the unit responsible for constructing, guarding, and executing the obstacle. Examples of reserve obstacles include preparing a bridge for destruction or an obstacle to close a lane. Units normally prepare reserve obstacles during the preparation phase. They execute the obstacle only on command of the authorizing commander or when specific criteria are met. (See FM 90-7, Chapter 6, for specific considerations for planning reserve obstacles.) It is critical for the unit to understand and rehearse actions to execute reserve obstacles.

NOTE: In addition to tactical obstacles, units also employ protective obstacles. Protective obstacles are a key component of survivability operations, providing friendly forces with close-in protection. (See FM 90-7.)

e. **Obstacle Groups.** Obstacle groups are one or more individual obstacles grouped to provide a specific obstacle effect. Battalions integrate obstacle groups to ensure that companies plan individual obstacles that support the scheme of maneuver. Companies integrate individual obstacles with direct- and indirect-fire plans to achieve the specified obstacle group effect.

(1) Obstacle groups normally attack the maneuver of enemy battalions. Normally, commanders plan obstacle groups along enemy battalion avenues of approach (Aas) as defined by company mobility corridors. They may plan a group along a company-size avenue of approach. Unlike obstacle zones or belts, obstacle groups are not “areas” but are relative locations for obstacle construction. Obstacle groups are represented by

obstacle effect symbols (block, fix, turn, disrupt) on battalion graphics; however, commanders may refine obstacle group symbology with individual obstacle graphics if the plan requires specific obstacle types.

(2) Battalion commanders plan obstacle groups within assigned obstacle zones or belts. When given a belt with an assigned effect, the battalion commander may use any combination of group effects if the sum effect of all groups achieves the overall effect of the belt.

(3) Obstacle groups impose strict limitations on company commanders to preserve the link between obstacle effects and the fire plan. The limitations are similar to the limitations imposed by a BP. A group does not give the exact location of obstacles in the group just as a BP does not show the exact location of each weapon in the company. The company commander and the emplacing engineer coordinate these details directly. Company commanders may make changes to obstacles and fire-control measures based on the reality of the terrain. These changes must be coordinated with and tracked by the battalion commander and staff to maintain the fidelity of the desired obstacle group effect and integration into the battalion scheme of maneuver.

(4) Battalions do not normally assign a company more than one obstacle group; however, a company may effectively fight two groups at a time if the terrain supports it. To mass fires on an obstacle group, more than one company often covers a single obstacle group within an EA. In these cases, the commander responsible for establishing the EA is also responsible for integrating the obstacle group. Normally, the battalion commander or S3 plays a significant role in building and synchronizing an EA covered by two or more companies.

(5) Obstacle groups, resource factors, and standard individual obstacles are the basis of battalion obstacle logistics planning. They enable the commander and staff to allocate the necessary resources to each obstacle group, EA, or company BP. These tools also enable the staff to identify critical shortfalls, plan the flow of materials within the battalion area, and schedule resupply.

f. **Tactical Obstacle Planning.** Detailed obstacle planning begins during COA development. The engineer focuses on five specifics in his scheme of engineer operations for the obstacle plan.

(1) ***Direct and Indirect Fire Analysis.*** The direct and indirect fire analysis examines how engineers can best use obstacles to enhance the direct and indirect fire plan. The engineer must have a fundamental understanding of the direct and indirect fire and maneuver plans and the battalion's organization of the EA to integrate obstacles effectively with the direct and indirect fire plan. The engineer must consider battalion EAs, TRPs, indirect fire targets, unit locations, enemy formations, AAs, and the commander's obstacle intent in order to effectively integrate obstacles. Synchronization of direct and indirect fires with obstacles multiplies the relative effect on the enemy.

(2) ***Obstacle Intent Integration.*** The engineer plans directed obstacle groups during the COA development process. Obstacle groups integrated into the COA sketch graphically depict the commander's obstacle intent to support the maneuver plan. Obstacle groups target specific enemy elements based on the SITEMP. The engineer generally allocates an obstacle group against a battalion-sized avenue of approach with respect to the EAs, TRPs, indirect fire targets, unit locations, enemy formations, and avenues of approach assessed during the direct fire analysis. This process parallels the

staff's placement of a company against the same size enemy force. The intent of the obstacle groups supports subordinate unit task and purpose. The engineer recommends specific obstacle group effects to the commander based on terrain, resources, time available, and the battalion commander's obstacle intent.

(3) **Obstacle Priority.** The staff determines the priority of each obstacle group. The commander's intent and the most likely enemy COA clearly influence the priority. The obstacle priority should reflect the battalion's most critical obstacle requirement. The battalion engineer considers flank protection, weapons types and ranges, and the commander's overall intent for the entire force before placing obstacle priority on the main EA. Priorities assist the engineer in allocating resources and ensuring that the most critical obstacle groups are constructed first.

(4) **Mobility Requirements.** The engineer identifies battalion mobility requirements by analyzing the scheme of maneuver, counterattack (CATK) options, reserve planning priorities, CS and CSS movement requirements, and adjacent and higher unit missions, maneuver, and movement. The engineer integrates this analysis into obstacle group planning and avoids impeding friendly maneuver whenever possible. Because the bulk of the engineer force is committed to countermobility and survivability during defensive preparation, the battalion commander uses clear obstacle restrictions on specific areas within the battalion AO to maintain mobility. If obstacles must be constructed along a mobility corridor that primarily supports friendly movement, a lane or gap--and associated closure procedures--must be planned and rehearsed. These lanes or gaps may be closed with situational or reserve obstacles.

(a) Beyond preparing and marking lanes and gaps through obstacles, engineers normally perform mobility tasks once defensive preparations are complete. Mobility assets may then be positioned to counter templated enemy situational obstacles, or be task organized to the reserve, CATK force, or any other unit that must maneuver or move subsequent to the execution of the defense. To do this effectively, the engineers and the supported maneuver unit must integrate, prepare, and rehearse. Since this manner of mobility support is critical to the success of the maneuver plan, timely linkup and coordination must be factored into the overall defensive preparation timeline.

(b) Sometimes the battalion may require significant mobility support during defensive preparation. Examples may include route clearance, road repair or maintenance, and LZ and PZ clearance. SBCT engineers are adequately resourced to perform this type of mobility support, but they clearly cannot concurrently prepare the defense and execute these tasks. Thus, the battalion requires augmentation from a divisional multifunction engineer battalion. These engineers perform general engineering tasks, leaving the SBCT engineers available to construct the battalion defense.

5-51. SURVIVABILITY

Survivability operations in support of ground maneuver elements are increasingly limited given force structure and tactical concepts. Digging-in combat vehicles is a technique that still has value in many situations, but the increasing need for mobility in defensive operations and the proliferation of precision munitions reduce the effectiveness of static, dug-in forces. Survivability efforts within the battalion should focus on protection of assets that must remain relatively static (such as communication nodes), support of

logistical and decontamination operations, and survivability for defending dismounted infantry.